

REFLECTIONS

O F



BEING A

Series of POLITICAL MAXIMS,

Illustrated by

GENERAL HISTORY, as well as
by Variety of authentic Anecdotes (never
published before)

O F

LEWIS XIV.
PETER the Great,
WILLIAM III.
K. of PRUSSIA,

|| The CARDINALS
RICH LIEU,
MAZARINE,
FLEURY,

And of most of the eminent Personages, in the
last and present Century.

L O N D O N :

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Plato's Head, near Round Court in the Strand.

MDCCLIII.



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1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses, which appears to be a directory or a list of contacts. The names are written in a cursive script, and the addresses are listed below them. The list includes names such as "John A. Smith", "John B. Smith", "John C. Smith", "John D. Smith", "John E. Smith", "John F. Smith", "John G. Smith", "John H. Smith", "John I. Smith", "John J. Smith", "John K. Smith", "John L. Smith", "John M. Smith", "John N. Smith", "John O. Smith", "John P. Smith", "John Q. Smith", "John R. Smith", "John S. Smith", "John T. Smith", "John U. Smith", "John V. Smith", "John W. Smith", "John X. Smith", "John Y. Smith", and "John Z. Smith".

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the and present Company.

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

T O

Mr. B * * * * R,

I Dedicate this piece to you, my dear brother, because I know that my best friend is the most penetrating and the most sincere of my judges.

The greatest number of these Reflexions belong to you, for I have received most of them from your conversation.

Under the mortification of being at so great a distance from you, 'tis some pleasure that this treatise seems to bring me nearer you.

And when I find that I amuse you, I shall the less regret the happiness I enjoy, during those agreeable moments when you open'd the secret recesses of your heart.

If my work meets with your approbation, I shall be in raptures; if it displeases the publick, I shall neither be sorry nor surpris'd.

Adieu, my dear brother, love me always, and be assur'd that notwithstanding the ties of nature, I love you as warmly as if I were under no obligation to love you.

Copenhagen, August 24. 1752.

GOMA de PALAJOS.



M Y

REFLEXIONS.

I.

A Work very useful and entirely wanting, is a treatise on projects.

Such a book would be very necessary for the present age; when the humour of projecting is become an almost epidemic distemper.

This is a very extensive subject; and as the modern taste requires that the greatest subjects should be treated in the narrowest compass, this task requires a genius extremely concise.

This treatise would above all be exceedingly useful to the petty princes of Germany. It would at least save them the expence of a privy-council.

B

The

II.

The spirit of the age is divided into two passions, the taste of projects, and the taste of pleasure.

Were we at the pains of analysing these two tastes, we might perhaps reduce them to one, the taste of trifles. The *Bagatelle* and the *Chimera* are more a-kin than we are apt to imagine.

There is however this distinction to be made: pleasures are expensive, but projects cost nothing; the sources which quench the thirst of our desires are soon exhausted, whereas our desires themselves are insatiable. Hence we may account why the age wherein our desires are most diversified, is precisely the age of projects.

III.

When the genius of a people is not yet fixed, when its political system is not yet establish'd, when its character is not yet open'd or has been alter'd by the shock of some revolution, then it must have projectors.



The

The madness of projecting is perhaps the strongest proof of an empire's infancy, and perhaps the best means of raising it from that state.

IV.

'Tis well for a nation to have a distinguishing character; nothing secures its independence better against the enterprizes of other nations.

But it is not indifferent, that every citizen should have a peculiar character: I pity every nation, which has but one uniform character for the citizen.

Nothing throws more variety into characters than a diversity of interests: the diversity of interests depends upon the diversity of views, which in its turn depends upon the diversity of projects: they are all links of the same chain.

The spirit of projecting annihilates that spirit of imitation, which always brings the particular character back to the general and uniform character.

V.

The most opulent, the most formidable, and the most happy state, must be that whose members are bold enough to be continually forming projects, and whose head is wise enough never to form any.

VI.

'Tis however equally true, that there are countries where it is proper for the prince to form projects, and where the subjects should be content with the glory of the execution.

VII.

The country where projects most abound, is always the country where money abounds most: and the country which has most money, has always the most humanity.

VIII.

Henry the IVth lov'd money, but in a manner peculiar to great minds.

He had form'd two projects, that of making himself master of his subjects properties, and that of putting every peasant in his
king-

kingdom in a condition of having every Sunday a fowl in his pot : they were his own expressions ; expressions dignified by the nobleness of the sentiment.

These two projects were perfectly consistent with his benevolence and avarice, but incompatible with one another.

I defy the wisest king in the world to solve this political problem.

However, that excellent prince reconcil'd those opposite ideas, by executing them at the same time:

1st, He made himself master of his subjects hearts. 2dly, He regulated his finances.

IX.

Projectors are in too great vogue, and in too great disrepute. In too great vogue : of a hundred, three-fourths are deceiv'd themselves in their calculations or intend to deceive others : fools or knaves.

In too great disrepute ; because the happiness of an empire is sometimes owing to a project.

It was a projector who has changed the face of Europe by introducing the ballance

of power. A projector made Paris the center of arts. A projector made France a trading nation. A projector shewed England that she oppressed the principles of liberty. Spain and Sweden are quite exhausted : two projectors are ready to restore life to these consumptive and languid bodies. Alberoni is disgraced : Goertz comes to an infamous death, if any thing can reflect infamy on great men. Sweden and Spain relapse into an apoplexy, till two superior geniuses, Ferdinand and Adolphus, appear to rouse them from their lethargy.

X.

Projectors are the physicians of the state ; they guess, assert, and lye as they do. Their reputation depends on chance and prejudice. They both take their advantage of human weakness, and grow rich by methods that ruin'd thousands. They both fluctuate between hope and fear : the world laughs at both, and can't live without either.

Are they, upon the whole, more useful or prejudicial ? A question, methinks, very puz-

puzzling. I believe however one may venture to say, it were to be wish'd, there never had been either physicians or projectors; but that it is not amiss, since there have been some, there should always be some in the world, were it only to repair the ills which their predecessors have occasioned.

XI.

In every country, people don't know enough the value of men: we are not sensible enough of the difference between man and man, or indulgent enough to the faults of great men.

XII.

'Tis a pretty general opinion, that one can't be a great man but at a certain age; as if the having a hoary head were having a sound one.

'Tis an error deriv'd from some Roman laws, which permitted the discharge of certain employments to persons only of riper years.

Augustus, who at twenty-two years of age, had rendred himself master of the world

and Rome, required forty in such as were to decide a law-suit.

One may commence great man, from the very first instant where the soul at liberty finds itself in circumstances to take a conspicuous flight.

Take a survey of the lives of heroes; you will find many who have been so from twenty to thirty, some from thirty to forty, few from forty to fifty, none from fifty to sixty.

At a certain age, it is too late to be married; too late to commence great man.

Twenty five is the age of heroism and capacity.

Perhaps age collects experience; but does it not also bring as much prejudices?

Experience makes the wise man, but does not make the great man. It gives good sense, but does not give talents. It sees inconveniencies, but does not imagine remedies, except comparison lends it a helping hand.

Time is not the only master of experience: books instruct. Lucullus had no experience

perience when Rome sent him to fight Mithridates : on his journey he read treatises on war ; on his arrival, genius beat experience.

History is full of old generals conquer'd by young soldiers. The rule is, that in such instances, the old commander passes only for unfortunate. For, in fact, with so much experience, how is it possible to be unskilful ?

Age does not make one a greater statesman no more than it does a great warrior. Would you compare Villeroy, grown grey in the offices of state, to Richelieu, an abbe at court ?

Every person whose knowledge is acquired only by experience, will often give very bad advice, because that knowledge don't extend to the difference of the times. An old man is but too subject to reduce to his own prejudices all the notions that he has collected from the copious sources of experience : besides this, fruitfulness of experience offering a prodigious variety of facts, produces an infinite number of differ-

ent reflexions, whose apparent contradiction genius alone can reconcile.

There are certain privileg'd souls, which seem born with all the penetration that experience can confer, like that goddess who issued compleatly arm'd from the brain of Jupiter.

XIII.

Is a man excusable who ventures further than the third project? Yes, if he is a projector.

XIV.

Every man that thinks much, forms many projects; and every man that thinks sensibly, never projects but for himself.

XV.

Projectors commit the greatest faults. Those who never project at all, commit the most faults.

XVI.

I have hugg'd my idea, I have survey'd it on all sides; I have cut it out, as it were, in squares: I have anticipated the pleasure.

Why

Why don't you execute your project? I have had already so much pleasure in the imagining, arranging, and combining of it, that I can't have any in the execution.

I love Eglé: I expect her with impatience; I desire her ardently; I see her with transport; I embrace her with raptures; I quit her with indifference, and renounce her with a kind of pleasure. A natural image of the greatest part of projectors.

XVII.

'Tis of no service to a superficial statesman to have a very sure taste.

'Tis of no service to a statesman of little genius to have a great deal of wit.

XVIII.

You are going to P——m, and will no doubt introduce your project. But to whom? To courtiers, who will repeat it without understanding it, will commend it without esteeming it, will contradict it without judgment, will judge it without knowledge.

XIX.

There is no medium ; you must either renounce your prepossessions, or the knowledge of truth.

I answer the projector ; your counsel is very proper for me, who find myself full of prejudices, and am very much dispos'd to divest myself of them. But don't risk it with every body : they will tell you, that renouncing what you call prepossession, would be renouncing truth : you see how hard a task it will be to make them relish your notions, to whom you must first propose entering into a course of logick with you. The point where they are, is a thousand leagues distant from the point where you would have them ; therefore don't reason with them : you must find in your purse arguments more simple and palpable.

My Project is extraordinary, and people laugh at it ; the sneerers are in the right on't : the extraordinary is near a-kin to the ridiculous.

But 'tis admirable, and yet despis'd ; the scoffers are again in the right : nothing more

more natural than to condemn what we excessively admire.

But it is a profound one, the criticks have again reason on their side; distance of objects produces the same effect as their minuteness, that is, indifference or mistake.

XX.

'Tis impossible to love labour without loving pleasure.

XXI.

There are certain suspicious minds, scared at every thing that has the face of novelty, as if what is in use to day, had not been new yesterday. Don't tell them you have a project on foot; talk to them only of an enterprize: all your mistrustful spirits are generally govern'd by names.

XXII.

Projectors! be clear in your memorials: what is a principle in the eyes of a deep philosopher, is an absurdity in those of a shallow statesman. Be concise: your judges are so often jaded, that a memorial is demonstrative

monstrative the moment it appears not tiresome.

XXIII.

Provided a projector be cunning, he may easily appear deep.

To speak a great deal and say little, to impose upon the publick by a grave and specious exterior, to avoid penetrating and discerning eyes, to make a suitable and dexterous display of some superficial knowledge, to elude coming to an eclaircissement by a disdainful silence, to deceive the vulgar by ignorant or interested puffers, to cloak the strongest desires under the veil of the most perfect indifference : this is more than sufficient to deceive women and the mob, and the whole world consists of almost nothing else but the mob and women.

XXIV.

The greater the misery of the people, the greater their submission; a horrid maxim which has served but too often as a pretext for the execution of many projects, and which can only be parallel'd by the following

ing one : the more a people are oppressed, the more industrious they are.

Kings ! fear nothing from a people, whom agriculture employs. Trade enriches, luxury enervates, and arts amuse. Tyrants ! fear every thing from a people who have nothing to lose.

The most independent of all beings is a person who has passed from extreme liberty to extreme servitude, from extreme opulence to extreme misery.

And the cruelest creature alive, is he who is intirely taken up with the thoughts of his misfortunes. A hundred thousand men will sink before a people whose attack is madden'd by despair.

XXV.

All the difference between the able statesman and the bungling minister, consists in the one's foreseeing the effects of the most extensive project, and the other's judging of the simplest project by the event. The former decides the success, the latter is decided by it.

I am

XXVI.

I am more upon my guard against phlegm in a projector, than against enthusiasm.

The phlegmatic may deceive me, but the enthusiast is the first deceiv'd himself.

The one is dangerous, because he has foreseen and is prepared for my objections : the other has never dreamt that a sensible person could start any : his imagination has serv'd him so well as to surmount all obstacles, and smooth all difficulties.

Coldness is the high road to obstinacy ; we must not pretend to argue with madmen, sceptics, or the self-sufficient. Enthusiasm naturally flags and subsides, because the animal spirits which are the cause of it, are dissipated and exhausted ; and the imagination once cool'd, is soon brought to reason.

One can't see the end of the phlegmatick man's projects ; they are trees, who are many years before they bear fruit : the projects of the enthusiast miscarry or succeed at once, like trees which the art of the chymist

mist covers almost in the same instant with fruits and flowers.

XXVII.

Querie, whether it be more preferable to survey objects sideways or in front ?

XXVIII.

I should be glad father de la Neiville examin'd this problem, " Whether it be
" more advantageous to be governed by
" good sense, than to be governed by
" genius ?"

XXIX.

Whether the bold or the timorous man be preferable in a counsel ?

The man of a bold genius sees nothing but the expediency of his project ; he but half sees its defects ; he defies prejudices and pays no deference to authority : he always maintains that the safety of the state is the supreme law.

The timorous man is averse to every thing that requires exalted views : whatever appears to him singular, becomes suspicious ; he is apprehensive of futurity : he

is

is flow in all his proceedings : he always alledges, that the state will easily support itself by the same principles by which it has been supported hitherto.

The true statesman steers the middle course between these two extremities. Whilst he respects prejudices, he puts the laws in force : he compares the times ; weighs the dangers and the hopes, the advantages and the losses : examines with caution, decides with wisdom, executes with courage, purposes with firmness, pursues his point with constancy, and succeeds with applause.

XXX.

What has that project of yours brought forth ?

As much as that tree you have planted : wait therefore for the event.

XXXI.

The man of judgment forms useful, but not extensive projects : it belongs only to the man of imagination to form vast and sublime projects.

I call

XXXII.

I call a fine project, that whose parts have all an intimate and necessary connection one with another ; all whose wheels, however numerous, depend upon one spring, actuated for the publick good. The machine once wound up, will go for whole ages ; except one of those revolutions, which change the face of all things, shifts the principal spring.

XXXIII.

There can't be too many projectors in a nation where there are more things to do than there are already done.

XXXIV.

A penetrating and humane citizen, is incessantly offended at the disorder that reigns in his country. His humanity shews him the faults of the administration, and his sagacity suggests the means of redressing them. Does he publish his interested views ; he passes for a projector, or an honest man that dreams.

The

The good cardinal Fleury look'd upon the abbe de Saint Pierre but as a projector : would Peter the great have form'd the like idea of him ?

Nature executed a masterpiece of workmanship in forming the abbe de Saint Pierre ; but she committed a greater blunder in the placing of him. He should have been born in Russia, and not in France, and have fill'd the post of Lefort, or that of Bargeac.

XXXV.

'Tis easier to raise to the highest pitch of power a barbarous nation, than to draw a civiliz'd nation from a state of mediocrity.

What I admire in Peter the great, is not his success, but his resolution and travels. After having civiliz'd himself, it was no difficult matter to civilize his savages ; but the difficulty lay in civilizing himself : for, 1st, He must have acknowledged himself a barbarian. 2dly, He must have confess'd it in the face of all Europe. 3dly, He must have known the means of shaking off his barbarity. 4thly, A most absolute and despotic emperor must have determin'd him-
self

self to sink to the low state of the vilest mechanick. 5thly, He must have learn'd the difficult science of quitting a throne which he could not fill with dignity, of abandoning a tottering throne without losing it : in fine, he must have been born again. No : never did project proclaim a greater foul.

The czar Peter must have been a great man, since he struck out a thought that had never been imagin'd in a country where there are fifteen millions of inhabitants; since he executed alone what a hundred of his predecessors had never thought of doing.

When it was noised abroad that this prince had projected that scheme, all Europe said, the czar's out of his senses. What, civilize the Russians ! that's absolutely impossible. Notwithstanding, Peter soon demonstrated to all Europe, that to perform impossibilities, a prince has nothing more to do than to resolve it.

What would he not have done in France, says monsieur de Voltaire, were we to judge by what he executed in Russia ? There he
built

built with brick, elsewhere he would have built with marble.

Monsieur de Voltaire may perhaps be out in his conjecture. A philosophick head may perhaps find more justness in the following reflexion : by seeing what the king of Prussia executes, let us judge what he would have done in the czar's place.

Were Peter king of France, he had perhaps neglected the sciences, would only have had half views, had gone bunglingly to work, or said, Let the world rub on in its own way.

'Tis incomparably easier to rise to a certain degree, than to raise from that degree to the point of perfection. And the point where perfection begins, is very remote from that where perfection ends.

Lewis the XIVth had certainly never achiev'd the wonders that Henry the IVth did : who, if transplanted to the age of Lewis the XIVth, had never signaliz'd himself by performances equal to his.

The following story excellently characterizes Lewis the XIVth and Peter the Ist.

Lewis

Lewis the XIVth went to see at the Sorbonne cardinal Richelieu's tomb: he was struck with the beauty of the workmanship, commended the hand of Girardon, order'd his own bust, settled a large pension on him, founded an academy of painting and sculpture. Peter was likewise desirous of seeing this master-piece of art: but instead of amusing himself with admiring it coldly, he springs upon the balustrade, throws himself upon the figure, embraces it, and cries out in transport, " O great man! wert thou but alive.——I would give thee half my dominions to learn how to govern the other half."

It has indeed been said, that Peter the Ist was infinitely superior to Charles the XIIth; but we have not yet been told for what reason: it is, I believe, that Charles the XIIth lost his time in conquering, and that Peter the Ist employ'd his in learning to govern.

Charles

XXXVI.

Charles the XIIth miscarried in his projects, not because they were badly concerted, but because they were ill executed.

Sweden should have had a Charles the XIIth to scheme, and a minister to direct the execution.

His projects were fine, vast and wonderful; but they seem'd to have been form'd amidst thunder and lightning.

Elevated with his first successes, he said: I must go there, and I will. He should have said, I must go there; but if I can't, where shall I go?

Had the senate of Sweden been invested with the same authority it at present enjoys, Sweden would have been the second kingdom of the world. A brave commander, a prudent council, a prince vast in his projects, rapid in the execution, steady in disappointments; a senate attach'd to the glory of the monarchy, but still more to the good of the people. A hero that knows how to conquer, and a senate that can make a right use of the victory.

Charles

Charles, after having been master of the senate, should have become their lieutenant; formed by nature to think in chief, he was made only to execute as a second.

XXXVII.

There is no project how vast soever you imagine it, but may be executed, if it be well contrived, and well conducted ; for it is impossible shallow understanding and imprudence can hold out against prudence and genius.

Cromwell was not a successful villain ; but a most dexterous, a most profound, and a most active villain. What a genius !

By the manner he had projected his schemes, he could not fail of dethroning his Sovereign. Follow him from the first moment of his appearance on the stage to the very instant of the unravelling of the piece, you will see the wisest conduct, the best concerted measures, the best laid plans: You will see all the actions of his life tending that one point, as the lines of a circle terminate in the center.

Give me a Stuart to whom God has given the soul of a Cromwell ; and I will make him king of England.

XXXVIII.

The philosopher disdains projects which aim only at the advantage of his own nation, because this interest is consistent with his principles ; he loves all mankind alike.

The philosopher therefore has no country. He will be no philosopher if he had. He does not sacrifice a remote kindred for one nearer. He does not forget relations out of sight for those that are before his eyes : His heart takes in all virtues, and his progress all mankind. M***! how venerable art thou in the eyes of the philosopher ! I will subscribe the following lines to the bottom of the picture of that virtuous citizen of the world.

Non ille fatis cognosse Sabinæ
Gentis habit ritus : animo majora capaci.
Concipit & quæ sit legum natura requirit.

An

An infallible way to be mistaken in the planning of a project, is the not making the principal object as simple as possible. And a means as certain of failing in the execution, is the not conducting all the parts of it together in front.

XL.

The madness of projecting is the madness of such as have nothing to lose. Methinks this maxim is false. This passion in the highest degree is found only in the ambitious; and the ambitious have a great deal to lose.

Misery is industrious, but industry stops, whereas ambition never stops. It is a horse whose very fatigues inspire him with new supplies of strength.

Necessity is the mother of projects, and at the same time of every useful discovery; in affluence projects are only made for pleasure; the honour of forming such as tend to the good of the public, seems reserved only for indigence. Opulence projects to preserve, indigence to acquire.

Opulence makes the seed come up, indigence opens and expands it.

XLII.

Nothing is talked of but the independency of a people, at a time where it is demonstrated, that it would not make them more happy; and not a word of the independency of kings at a time, where it is demonstrated, that this very independency would make the people more free.

XLII.

I saw to-day a most decisive, and also a most bewitching projector. To the real graces of expression he joined the apparent solidity of argument. The delicacy of his thoughts does not interfere with their depth. He is always of your opinion, and always brings you over to his. It is a pleasure to go astray with him; he is not always in the same composed situation, he sometimes gives way to the fallies of his passion, strays and loses himself, and again recovers by surprising efforts of genius. He is a projector through indolence, and would be an excellent negociator by profession; through all
his

his feigned modesty, you may easily discover that he imagines himself capable of ruling an empire: And I would not give him the government of a village: He is the first hand in the world for transacting a delicate commission. Give him a good plan, and depend upon the success, if you can answer for his adding nothing of his own to it. A good project will lose as much by passing through his hands, as it will gain by passing through his mouth.

XLIII.

Most arts have been perfected; the art of governing is the only one that has remained imperfect.

Arts have attained their perfection, because the artists, of what country or age soever, have always had the same object in their eye. The art of reigning has remained imperfect, because it has been exercised by persons who had not all the same interest. Arts have been cultivated by persons who had a natural passion for them: The art of ruling has been cultivated only by those whom fortune had invested with it.

Royalty has been considered as a burthen as a dignity ; it has been sometimes considered even as a duty, but never as an art.

XLIV.

The project of Brutus and Cassius was ill concerted. They acted like citizens, not like statesmen.

The citizen said : we must assassinate only Cæsar, because Cæsar alone oppresses us ; the statesman would have said, we must dispatch Cæsar, dispatch Antony, stifle the ambitious hopes of Octavius : It is not sufficient to punish the tyrant, we must destroy tyranny ; not enough to cut down the tree, we must tear up the very roots of it. So said Cicero, who was never in his life a statesmen till it was too late.

If Brutus and Cassius had as much genius as they had greatness of soul, they would have seen, that Rome immersed in luxury could not do without a master ; to restore its liberty, they must restore its ancient morals. The reformation of manners which they never dreamt of, should have been the basis of their project.

XLV.

XLV.

Let us not lament the lot of the projector; he fears, but he hopes still more, and hope is the sweetest of all passions : he is refused, but is not dejected : it is Marius sitting upon the ruins of Carthage. He finds new pleasures in his new projects; trust his imagination, and he will be soon comforted. The mind runs, flies, and fixes on the object the heart presents to it.

XLVI.

How came Theodore and Rienzi to get themselves elected kings? because they had a genius. Why was their reign so short? because they had no head.

XLVII.

Excepting some truths, all the propositions that regard trade are problematical. Were princes sincere, they would confess they are always of his opinion who spoke last; and if they do not always follow it, it is because the decisions of princes are not always their own sentiments.

XLVIII.

Were we to weigh the greatest part of new projects in the ballance of Montaigne, we should be obliged to clap his motto to them; *Que scai je?*

However, notwithstanding this uncertainty, a country is not the less unfortunate for being governed by a narrow and contracted genius, who has but half views, or by a diffident and timorous one, who takes but half resolutions.

XLVIII.

A useful project is sometimes cried down only because it is introduced by a foreigner; and it oftentimes happens that it is only because it is presented by a foreigner, that it is useful.

Since trade has established intimate connexions between the different nations of Europe, they have all lost natural subjects, and have acquired foreigners.

The natives of a country have every where their mouths opened against foreigners, because they are more industrious, that is to say,

say, better subjects. Their services are their crimes.

Foreigners would be less odious, say you, were they less intriguing: I believe it; but were they less intriguing, they would be burthen some to the natives. Now there can be no ballancing between contempt and envy, between pity and hatred.

To whom does England owe its fine woollen manufactories. To the Waloons who took refuge there, under Elizabeth. To whom is Ireland indebted for its linnen manufactories? To the French, whom persecution and poverty had forced thither. To whom does the king of Prussia owe his crown, and the means of supporting it? To foreigners whom the humane policy of the great elector had attracted thither. I should never have done were I to enumerate all the advantages that foreigners have enriched those countries with, who have admitted them. What then can be objected to them? Their fortune? Their riches are those of the state. Their luxury? It introduces abundance. Their ambition? That is the common foible of all mankind.

Their advancement to the first employments? They are capable of filling them with distinction. Their attachment to their first country? They are attached to the state by affection and interest. Are not the Amaquois, the Waloons, the French refugees, and the Irish in France, as faithful subjects as the natives of the country itself. Disperse over your country a hundred thousand foreigners; there will not be one in the second generation.

Henry the IVth, that great prince, who committed so few faults, was guilty of a very great one, in refusing the Moors of Spain a settlement on the heaths of Bourdeaux.

The value of land encreases in proportion to the number of its inhabitants. Why then do the proprietors hate foreigners that enrich them?

Arts flourish, and trade improves in proportion to the number of hands that cultivate them. Why then do artists and traders hate foreigners, who by taking off part of their labour, make that part they leave them turn out to greater advantage?

The

The more a country is inhabited, the richer it is. What signifies it then to a prince, convinced of this maxim, that such foreigners are of such or such a religion, provided that religion recommends industry, and preaches obedience?

A nation is generally impatient under the government of foreigners; and that is very natural: However, there are circumstances where a nation cannot be capable of governing itself without submitting to the government of foreigners.

One might compile a large book, of the mischiefs occasioned in nations by foreigners that have governed them; one might still compose a larger one of the wise regulations they have made.

The natives of a country are too much accustomed to the abuses of the constitution to redress them: they cannot be remedied but by foreigners, who are the more offended by them, as they are the less familiarised to them. In short, the natives are better acquainted with the strength of a country; foreigners are more sensible of its weakness. Keep this in your eye, and you

will exactly assign to both parties the share they ought to have in the administration.

Trade is wholly got into the hands of foreigners. And why have you suffered them to engross it? Why has not your industry traversed theirs?

A foreigner, who is at the head of affairs, and who does not love his master, is a mere novice. If he does not respect the privileges of the ancient nobility, he incurs the public hatred without the least advantage: he excludes his posterity from advantages which may one day be perhaps their only sanctuary. Nothing but an extreme zeal, a zeal beyond the reach of suspicion, for the interest, or for the glory of the prince, can justify certain steps, which tho' glorious in a native, are detestable in a foreigner.

There is no nation so averse to receive its ministers or heroes from foreigners, as that which gives to foreigners neither ministers nor heroes.

A foreigner has, you say, one motive less to govern well; but there may be a foreigner in whom that want may possibly become

become an additional motive: For honour is very powerful. In general, I believe, that a foreigner of probity and capacity will do a country more service, than a native of capacity and probity in the same degree.

Foreigners attached to a country by pensions, have no other ties but those of interest and gratitude. These ties are very weak; but happily no state is over-charged with such incumbrances. These subjects do not conduce to the advantage, but to the brilliancy of a nation; and that brilliancy is sometimes productive of utility. They have a continual war to maintain against envy, because the state is never without persons who want pensions, and seriously imagine that such a pension is no more than they deserve. The greatest mortification of a foreign pensioner is, to be considered by the courtier as one that is screened, by the citizen as an adventurer, by the people as a drone, by men of business as an interloper. It is much worse, when he is conscious that the courtier, the citizen, and the people are in the right.

XLIX.

Let us run over ancient and modern history, we shall not find an instance of a prince's settling a pension of seven thousand crowns on a man of learning, merely as a man of learning. There have been greater poets than Voltaire; but never any so well rewarded, for taste never limits its bounty. The king of Prussia accumulates favours on men of capacity, [precisely for the same reasons that induce a German prince to squander his bounties on a buffoon, or a dwarf.

L.

Are there more qualifications requisite to destroy an empire, than there are to found it? A problem worthy of a philosophical pen. I maintain the affirmative; and I believe, that an usurper cannot subvert a well settled empire, without having not only all the talents of a destroyer, but also those of a founder: It is a machine which one cannot take to pieces, without being acquainted with its mechanism, without being able to fit

fit it up again: witness Cromwel, who in overturning the throne was able to establish the admirable system of the English constitution.

LI.

I would be willingly informed, says Madam de Puyfieux in the Second part of her Characters, p. 128, what the greatest part of women do with a mathematician, a chemist, or mechanist? Why, just what every woman that loves pleasure does with every man that does not hate it.

LII.

In general, we require too much capacity for little employments, and require too little for great ones.

LIII.

Let the world, say you, rub on its own way. The world does not move of itself; it is no indifferent matter what movement we give the machine, especially when we lie contiguous to a nation on the watch to calculate the degrees of its velocity, force, and motion.

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An Englishman put the question; whether the Czar Peter's project of civilizing and instructing his nation, was a good one? He is of opinion that such a project could be schemed only by a philosophical head, and that it would have been rejected by a more philosophical head.

It is true, that as arts and sciences do not tend to make a nation the happier, Peter would have done his people no great service in rescuing them from barbarity, if all other nations had been in the same situation, equally ignorant, and equally barbarous. But as the happiness of a nation depends upon the relation it stands in, with regard to its neighbours, the Czar could not have deserved better of his subjects, than in setting them upon a level with their improved neighbours: The Swede was no longer formidable when the Russians enjoyed advantages equal to the others advancement in knowledge. Peter must have stolen the fire from heaven, to wrest the superiority from the Swedes. With this ascendancy it would have been very easy for Charles the XIIth

to conquer Russia. Peter the Ist was born therefore very seasonably, and his project suitable to the circumstances.

Besides, it was very good in itself : I have just now advanced, that arts and sciences do not contribute to a people's happiness ; this was only a supposition to keep clear of every circumstance. For it is no difficult matter to prove both by experience and reason, that the sciences are infinitely conducive to the happiness of mankind. They brace the bonds of society, and society is certainly an advantage ; they soften the manners, they rescue man from idleness, and consequently from every vice. All arts are instruments of pleasure, and so far means of happiness. Anarchy and Despotism prevail every where, where the sciences are not cultivated. Europe is become more virtuous since it is more enlightened ; a civilized country may have less eminent virtues, but it has surely virtues in greater number. The sciences must be necessary for our happiness, since nature has given us so keen a relish for them, as to rank them in the number of
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our wants. To what purpose had she lavished away all these talents, were they directed only to hurtful objects?

This once being granted, there is no doubt but the project of Peter the 1st was useful to his subjects. And the success speaks for him. By carrying the sciences into his country, he at the same time carried along with them the taste of pleasures; and this taste by degrees banished the excess of them. Crimes become more rare in proportion, as the mind is employed among a greater variety of occupations. There is at present among the Russians more politeness, more honour, more decency, and consequently less corruption. Tho' even the projects of the Czar were productive of no other effect than the softning the yoke, the reconciling the supreme authority to the laws, the restraining of arbitrary power, this were sufficient to engage the applause of every tender heart. The cause of the Russian nation is the cause of human nature.

LIV.

‘ There needs only, says the Abbe
 ‘ Trublet, a small number of men of the
 ‘ first parts to think, invent, and com-
 ‘ mand.” *Essais de Literat. & de Morale*,
 Vol. II. Page 314.

This proposition of his, is not just. For
 there requires only few men of parts to
 command, but there must be many to in-
 vent, and there cannot be too many to think.

LV.

Fools have vices ; men of sense have im-
 perfections, oddities and foibles.

LVI.

The last lines of a courtier's will. “ My
 ‘ son, you will never make your fortune, if
 ‘ you do not inviolably fix on one plan.
 ‘ This plan you will find in the history of
 ‘ my life. May you be as a happy, and more
 ‘ wise, than I have been.

‘ Every day is not alike at court, do
 ‘ not therefore assume to-day the same face,
 ‘ the same air, the same character you had
 ‘ yesterday.

‘ Be

‘ Be virtuous, at least at heart ; capacity
 ‘ is often disgraced, but virtue never is, and
 ‘ never can be in disgrace.

‘ Integrity of heart, and justness of un-
 ‘ derstanding, are the greatest obstacles to
 ‘ politeness : Nevertheless, my son, improve
 ‘ your heart and understanding. Conceal
 ‘ your talents under the veil of a happy
 ‘ mediocrity. If you have understanding
 ‘ you will pass for a cunning, sly, and dan-
 ‘ gerous person, and perhaps for a man of
 ‘ a bad heart. If you are *a fool*, you will
 ‘ be judged incapable of transacting any
 ‘ affair; with wit, you will be hated; *without*
 ‘ *wit*, you will be despised. Be therefore
 ‘ neither a fool nor a wit.

‘ If your talents transpire, you are un-
 ‘ done ; let the great man never be seen or
 ‘ guessed in you. Why is the political
 ‘ system of many councils defective and
 ‘ uniform? Because those in power are
 ‘ attentive in training up only successors
 ‘ that are like themselves, whose likeness is
 ‘ their misfortune.

‘ Aspire to the first employments, but
 ‘ do not aim at being a favourite. That is
 ‘ acquired

‘ acquired with difficulty, preserved with
‘ anxiety, and lost with despair. The dis-
‘ grace would be supportable, could one
‘ comfort himself in the bosom of a friend.

‘ Let not the first faults discourage you ;
‘ nor the first misfortunes deject you. In
‘ youth all faults are lessons, and all mis-
‘ fortunes are resources.

‘ Do not despise the successful; but never
‘ contribute to the deference that is paid
‘ him.

‘ Talents, wealth, and employments
‘ give pretensions to esteem; but virtue
‘ alone gives a right to it.

‘ Get esteem: but do not be eager to
‘ spread your reputation: The more it is
‘ diffused the more problematical it be-
‘ comes; nothing is so prejudicial to one’s
‘ fortune as to bring one’s honour and repu-
‘ tation into question.

‘ Take care of falling into the madness
‘ of projects: Never form any yourself, and
‘ make your advantage of those that are
‘ introduced by others.

‘ If you are obliged to chuse, keep fair
‘ rather with a fool than a man of sense. At

‘ court

‘ court stupidity is more mischievous than
 ‘ malice. Nothing is more ingenious than
 ‘ an exasperated fool.

Never make yourself enemies, and especially
 ‘ cially timorous enemies.

‘ At court, merit rises by cringing and
 ‘ incapacity by impudence. Cringe therefore
 ‘ fore with a little impudence.

‘ Be always on your guard against a person
 ‘ whom you know guilty of a known
 ‘ villany. The heart of a man can no more
 ‘ be changed than his complexion.

‘ In whatever situation you are, behave
 ‘ with infinite circumspection towards every
 ‘ thing *that is only a courtier*. I do not
 ‘ know any think more dangerous than an
 ‘ idle person who desires to make himself
 ‘ formidable.

‘ Do not desire to be promoted before
 ‘ you become a man of consequence. Persuade
 ‘ the public that whilst you can set
 ‘ no bounds to your services, you can
 ‘ without difficulty limit your ambition.
 ‘ May you, my son, be happy and a man
 ‘ of honour, an esteemed courtier, and an
 ‘ estimable citizen.’

LVII.

The more powerful a prince is in his own country, the less he is so with foreigners. The same cause that increases his power at home, annihilates it abroad.

LVIII.

To have a religion, to be without morals, is not only a sign of a bad heart, but also of small understanding. It is believing that the most sublime virtue is not incompatible with vice; this is the most dangerous and most absurd kind of heresy.

A prince is very unfortunate if he has no religion, because it is very difficult for him to be an honest man, and still more to appear so. He ought therefore at least to pretend to have religion, to secure the hearts of his subjects, and the confidence of foreigners. A private person who is a hypocrite is a detestable wretch; an unbelieving prince, who is no hypocrite is a very poultry politician.

One might say to princes who renounce the outward profession of the religion settled
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in their dominions : You have no religion yourselves, but would you chuse your subjects should have as little as you ?

Nothing throws a greater contempt upon ever necessary virtues than the examples we have of great princes to whom they have not appeared necessary.

I once heard a sensible man say : ‘ I would
 ‘ be once burnt for the christian religion,
 ‘ and twice burnt for the catholick. It
 ‘ would be an enterprize worthy a philoso-
 ‘ phical prince to instruct his people in such
 ‘ a manner as to be disposed to die twice
 ‘ for the first principles, and once only for
 ‘ the secondary ; such a people would be
 ‘ more virtuous and more tolerating.’

LIX.

A state will be more flourishing if the projects of the prince tend to his own glory ; but it will be more happy if his schemes aim at the public good. An empire will always get more by being governed by a citizen than by a hero, by a humane heart than by a superior genius. Suppose an equal degree of capacity, the patriot king will perform

perform greater things, and commit less faults. Sensibility of heart has always a justness of sentiment, because it has not time enough to make refined reflexions.

LX.

The president de Montesquieu has opened the principles of the three different governments; but these principles do not extend to the different nations of Europe, for there is no longer in Europe either monarchy, or democracy, or despotism. At present every thing is mercantile. Laws, regulations; the marine, finances, all have that object in view. The principle of interest is the principle of all states. If we except Turkey and another country, still governed by fear, commerce is every where the supreme legislator.

The last century was that of honour, because the government was military. The present is that of interest, because the government is mercantile. There is now less brilliancy in our actions, but more humanity in our manners, and what is more surprising, with a passion for riches, which

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one would imagine capable of stifling every other sentiment, we have a great deal of that general virtue which takes in the love of all mankind. There is not so much elevation in our souls, but more justness in our minds.

I am extremely fond of those minds superior to every thing but infamy; the state cannot have too many of them; but I am not less in love with those gentle, easy, and sagacious minds, superior to every thing but indigence, and the state cannot produce too many of them.

From democracy to monarchy, from monarchy to limited despotism, from limited despotism to military government, from military government to the republican, from the republican to the monarchical: This is what is called the political circle: This is what has always been, and always will be under the temperate zone.

LXII.

A prince who does not respect the laws is very weak. They are his greatest security when the laws do not protect the subject,

ject, who will protect the sovereign ? His guards.

A monarch's safe amidst ten thousand hands,
A tyrant 'midst his guards unguarded stands.

The majesty of the laws ?

Who violates, can ne'er invoke the laws:
Fear ?

In desp'rate ills, no farther ill to fear.
Force ?

All force is vain against perfidious hearts

LXIII.

There is none of your petty German princes, how inconsiderable soever he be, who does not form projects of trade. These projects generally vanish in smoke, either because these princes have undertaken beyond their abilities, or undertaken with too much œconomy, or with too much precipitation. The greatest part have calculated the produce, before they have distinctly laid out their plan.

Great projects succeed one another very rapidly in little states, because the princes are replaced by successors who desire to have their establishments, and their glory to

themselves, and who say upon their accession to the government, *And we too are princes.*

LXIV.

The first step on the throne is the most difficult. Most princes have reigned as they at first promised to reign.

A philosophical people may read the history of a king's reign in the history of the first month of his administration.

All princes are accomplished before their accession to the Throne. Their infancy is full of prodigies. Their courtiers disperse their reputations to the farthest corners of their kingdoms. The people conceive hopes on the promises of courtiers, who know very well that there is nothing to be hoped for but for themselves.

The words, the sentiments, the actions which escape young princes, whilst they are yet subjects, are for the most part decisive. In a tender age, we are not yet acquainted with the wretched art of masking ourselves. Nature always discovers itself before reason. Seneca and Burrhus had foreseen the cruel

and bloody reign of Nero: They had remarked in their pupil, a low and savage heart. It is Tacitus relates the fact. Perhaps it is a conjecture which does too much honour to the judgment of Seneca and Burrhus; and I do not doubt but if Tacitus had been in their place, that great man would have foretold all the miseries that were to befall the Roman empire.

Lewis the XIVth when a child, was harangued by the parliament. He made their deputies no answer. His governor represented to him, that this silence was very mortifying to a body whose zeal he should have commended. "That is true, replied 'the young monarch in a very mortified tone, but nothing occurred to me worthy 'of myself.' If this fact is false, those that invented it were well acquainted with Lewis the XIVth; if it be true, it was easy for the governor to foresee that this prince would be fond of glory; would be ambitious; that he would say and undertake great things; that he would be jealous of his dignity; that he would take a signal vengeance on the slightest affront; that he would support his

his right of precedency by an army of fifty thousand men. That he would be excessively desirous of flattery and applause; that while he was transported, that the wisest nation in Europe acknowledged the grandeur of his power, he should be mortified not to give it equally proofs of the greatness of his soul; that his court would be the refuge of kings, and his capital the center of arts; that he would overlook many faults in such of his ministers as would make him speak with dignity; that in disasters, he would sooner resolve to bury himself under the ruins of his throne, than set his hand to what derogated from his honour; in a word, that he would be the very man he was, that is, without dispute the greatest of all princes, if the love of glory in him had been tempered with a greater love of justice; or, to speak more justly, if his judgment had been equal to his capacity.

XLV.

The venality of employments made all true Frenchmen murmur. It was the avarice
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of princes, and the necessity of the times that introduced it, the same causes have propagated and maintained it. I am sorry for the honour of policy, that it is not one of its productions : It would be its masterpiece.

It is astonishing that there should be a nation, where the right of judging is sold, and yet the judgments are not bought; where industry is encouraged by employments, and where the employments are not vilified.

Something still more astonishing is, that this nation buys the right of being ruined, and knocked in the head for the service of their prince.

This venality in filling up the bench of judicature, and of military promotions, is one of the greatest excellencies of the French *police*; and this great perfection would be one of the greatest misfortunes that could happen in Denmark.

LXVI.

There is perhaps no project more problematical than that of Mareſhall de Vauban.

According to his opinion the general tithe upon people's fortunes, may very nearly defray all the expences of the state. His scheme was at first rejected, afterwards tried, then adopted in part, at last set aside, but executed under another form and another denomination.

This reflexion proves equally, that a projector should never be discouraged, and that a man of quality does not debase himself by entering into the detail of the finances.

This detail is perhaps the only one that requires a great genius. *Sully, Colbert, Law, Machault*; what heads! These were all nothing else but comptrollers general. It is easy for a prince to fill up a title; but hard to fill up a place. In a minute he may have a thousand schemers; but in twenty years he will not find one minister.

The finances are almost every where badly administered, less through the incapacity of those employed, than through the uncertainty they lie under of being long employed. What great enterprize can he undertake who is in dread every moment of being
ordered

ordered to give in his accounts? what probability of his working for his successor? The greatest part of useful projects are slow in the execution. The cure takes up some time; the pallatives may be applied in an instant; instead of labouring for the interest of the state, the minister labours for his own glory; he might enrich his citizens; and he only dazles his prince. At every instant the solid is sacrificed to the brilliant: He choses to enjoy.

LXVII.

I mightily like the humour of that person, who, vexed at his wife's barrenness, said,
 ' I cannot have heirs to my name, to my
 ' fortune, or to my honours: Well, to be
 ' revenged on nature, I will give masters
 ' to my country, and to be revenged of my
 ' wife, I will give heirs to my king. He
 ' did so, and did well.'

Mazarin and Richelieu, have often been compared; but never was a more improper parallel, for Mazarin was not a great man, but a miser.

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Richelieu,

Richelieu, who was a good judge of men, had no esteem for Mazarin, yet he employed him; and how many persons did he employ, precisely because they deserved no esteem? He was wont to say of him, if I had a mind to cheat the devil, I would send him Mazarin. Mazarin was not a great man, but a dexterous man. And he was not even that in the opinion of Don Lewis de Haro, who found him too crafty in his negotiations. The peace of the Pyrénées is his masterpiece for the consequences, and the peace of Munster for the reality.

Italian cunning might still pass in that age, when the principles of sound politicks were not well known. At present the Machiavelian would excite the detestation of all Europe, without engaging its admiration. The abhorrence that we should be apt to shew for such a minister as Mazarin, would not even leave him the reputation of dexterity.

He is praised for not shedding blood; but it is without considering that his predecessor had left him very little to shed. Besides,

sides, it is praising him only for not having committed crimes.

France must have been harrassed by the cruelties of Richelieu, since she could not find a juster encomium to bestow on his successor and pupil, than that of not having made her entirely miserable. Would it have been said that Mazarin was sparing of blood, if Richelieu had not been lavish of it. It is only in Turkey, in China, and in countries where oppression is perpetual, that it is the greatest glory of a prince not to be an oppressor.

Let people ascribe to the misfortune of the times, and the necessity of making examples, the cruel instances of cardinal de Richelieu's vengeance; however, he may be justified by the happy effects they produced, such as the settling and extending of the regal authority. For my part I condemn him, as every good heart must; and assert that there is no violence for which such maxims won't apologize. And perhaps I should question, whether that minister, who has been so serviceable to France and Europe in humbling the house of Austria, has done

his country and prince any service, by enlarging the bounds of the royal authority within the kingdom, in contempt of all such laws as were provided to limit and mitigate it.

He performed an act of the highest policy in bringing down the independant power of the grandees, so that at this time we see no remains of it. It was a political step to take from the protestants all their strong holds. A political step to remove from employments the princes of the blood, and reduce them to the condition of simple subjects.

But were not these dispositions sufficient to enlarge, and settle the regal authority? Where was the necessity of making it absolute? Did not he hurry things from one extreme to another? Did not he change the fundamental constitution of the kingdom?

I do not examine whether the abolition of the assembly of the states was an act of wisdom and deep policy; but I may boldly advance that instead of humbling the parliament, it had been better to leave it a little of that small share which the assemblies of

the states had in the legislation. Every true Frenchman is now sensible of the expediency, and even necessity of it. However remote they may seem to be from that point, yet they must return back to it: That will be the case when the male administration of the finances, when an imprudent violation of the laws shall have opened people's eyes, upon the wisdom and the truth of remonstrances that have been too long disregarded.

What has the cardinal Richelieu's policy produced? It executed with violence, what trade would have performed more slowly and more usefully. Policy was like a torrent that bore down all before it: Trade would have been like a fruitful stream that would have diffused every where fertility and abundance.

Tho' a zealous partisan for the regal authority, yet I cannot help admitting this proposition: If the parliament of Paris had any share in the legislative power, France had without doubt been the richer, for the credit of the state would have been more extensive as it would be less in danger. Greater riches
would

would give proportionable power to the nation. The royal authority therefore, such as established by Richelieu, was prejudicial to the real power. Richelieu therefore has laboured for himself, for Lewis the XIIIth, and if you will for his own age; but not for the French, nor for Lewis the XVth, nor for posterity.

The cardinal de Richelieu had acquired more true glory, if instead of amusing himself with clearing up court intrigues to increase the king's power, he had formed the marine, and improved trade according to the plans that had been laid down in the preceding reign. He had not examined thoroughly the genius of the Nation that he governed: He thought with the mob, in this particular. He conceived the French capable only of trifles, of agreeable arts and intriguing. Colbert knew them better. A minister who lies under the popular errors of his times deserves doubtless some excuse: But a minister who can see these mistakes, and who instead of thinking as the age or nation he lives in, brings over that age and

and nation to think as he does, such a man deserves the highest encomiums.

Father Joseph has been set above cardinal de Richelieu: This is an unwarrantable paradox. The cardinal was a statesman, and to be so requires penetration and superiority of genius: The capuchin was only an intriguer, and for that nothing is wanting but activity and meanness of heart.

Cardinal Richelieu could not do without a father Joseph. He wanted a simple, active and impenetrable emissary, entirely devoted to his designs, who had some morals, but no religion, capable of being his confident without becoming his rival, whose talents he might employ without fearing his ambition. A man whom no-body could distrust, and yet who should deceive every body. Who could support him in affairs of consequence, and have the direction of the lesser. Who was to confer with spies, while he treated with foreign ministers. One who could rouse his resolution in disasters, and restrain his impetuosity in success, upon whom he might throw all the odium of certain steps, without fearing his carrying off the glory of his

his greater actions, whose heart was impenetrable to foreigners, whose birth was supportable to the great, whose function imposed on the people, and whose devotion gained upon the king; one in short who loved France entirely, and whose sentiments persuaded him that he might recal him to life in the moment of his expiring, by saying only, 'Courage father, Brissac is taken.'

There are no more father Josephs, because there are no more Richelieus; and who knows but the world is the happier for it.

It is reported that this minister finding he wanted a man of confidence, was in some suspense whether he should choose him among the Capuchins, or among that society which is so fruitful in men of fine parts and genius. The high reputation of that society in politicks, was what prejudiced them in his opinion, because he very clearly saw that this reputation would be a great hinderance to his designs. He therefore sought out a Jesuit among the Capuchins; this is a mere fiction, but yet a very sensible fiction.

section. The choosing a Jesuit would be laying white upon white, metal upon metal, and acting contrary to the first principles of politicks and heraldry.

Cardinal de Richelieu and Father Joseph were entirely cut out for the parts they acted; they were the first hands in the world, each in his sphere. Shift their parts, and you misplace their talents, and bring them down to mediocrity. Richelieu had too great a soul not to be inferior to the Capuchin; and Joseph too little a soul not to fall short of the cardinal.

What is the reason that the one continued not always a pious drone, and the other a wretched polemic, or a paultry scribler of plays? Is there in the political world a secret spring which always raises such to the government of the state, as are born to form its destiny? There are indeed many men but few great men misplaced. ‘ I am naturally timorous, said Richelieu, I never dare undertake any thing, till I have made serious and repeated reflexions on it; but after having taken my resolution, I execute
‘ boldly,

‘ boldly, I push a tiny point, I overturn all,
 ‘ I mow down all before me, and then
 ‘ cover all with my red cloak,’ *Mem. de*
 ‘ *Montchel*. These words are a key to the
 whole history of his ministry, and a proof
 that a man may know and describe him-
 self.

One reflexion more before I have done.
 Mademoiselle de—— could not take off
 her eyes from a picture of the king done
 by Pilo: If we are fond of thinking,
 we cannot quit Richelieu; had he not
 been prime minister to Lewis the XIIIth,
 that prince would not have had a worse sub-
 ject. That very man who carried the royal
 authority so far, would have despised it. If
 he had not been in power to humble the
 grandees, he would have joined them to
 humble the king.— He would have har-
 rassed France had he not governed it. Had
 he not been sovereign master at court, he
 would have embroiled it by his intrigues:
 He would have been the soul of all the dis-
 affections that he reconciled, of all the con-
 spiracies that he prevented, of all the re-
 bellions that he stifled. Who would imagine
 that

that he who taught the French obedience, could not obey himself? He would have shed less blood, if he had not been persuaded that the rebels were as ambitious as himself; his genius conquered them, and his heart judged them. Richelieu should have made his appearance in a very mean, and abject, or in a superior, and elevated sphere, a dangerous citizen, a glorious king, such is his character; he should have had a country parsonage, or the prime minister's place. It would have been very much to the honour of Lewis the XIIIth, that the high promotion of Richelieu had been the effect of free choice, and unbiassed reflexion, that he had been enough acquainted with the human heart, to observe that his confiding in the bishop of Lucon attached him to his interest, and that no man was fitter to fix the throne than he who was capable of overturning it; and to make use of Tully's expression in monsieur de Voltaire's Tragedy of *Rome delivered*.

To kindle in his soul fair virtue's flame,
Her voice alone can noble souls reclaim.

The fortunate shun, and hate one another: the wretched love, and seek each other. Monsieur de Maurepas had rather live with monsieur de Chauvelin than with the most favourite courtier at Versailles.

That would be an exceeding curious book of memoirs, that could oblige the world with an exact and circumstantial detail of the conversations of de Fouquet, and de Lawzun, in the prison of Pignerol.

What is most mortifying to a disgraced minister, is not the loss of friends, nor the loss of favour, nor his exile from court, nor the insolence of a populace, always cruel to the unfortunate; but his removal from his office. He was incessantly complaining of being quite jaded with business, and his being discharged from this load is what creates the anguish of his heart. It is not envy that torments him, but curiosity; he is not wretched because he has no share in transactions of the court; but purely because he is in the dark about them, and does not any longer see the playing of the
the

the springs which he himself put in motion.

Therefore when after the death of Charles the VIth, monsieur de Chauvelin said, that he would consent to live only three days, provided on the first he assisted at the council of France, the second at the council of Spain, and the third at the council of England, he did not in this advance an absurdity; he only expressed in a natural manner, a natural and almost indelible sentiment.

Disgrace, as it restores the minister to himself, and to his family, restores him to a state of inactivity. He might be happy if his employment had not spoiled his understanding; every thing that is not a state affair appears but trifling in his eyes; in vain does he call in philosophy to his assistance. Philosophy cures the foibles of the heart, but not the diseases of the mind. If kings knew how harsh disgrace was, they could never resolve to inflict so heavy a calamity, or to speak more justly, they would never admit any to their confidence, but
persons

persons whom they could not disgrace without dishonouring themselves.

LXX.

A negociator who has the misfortune to be reputed cunning, is fit only to draw up instructions. He can no longer act in person, he will treat by others with less glory, but with more success.

Eloquence and negotiating are so far alike that the famous precept of the rhetoricians is equally applicable to both: the highest perfection of art is the concealing our art.

There are negociators who lie under the misfortune of passing for cunning, without having the advantage of being so in reality. Their whole cunning lies only in their physiognomie misinterpreted, because it is dark and unintelligible. This reputation anticipates their arrival wherever they go to reside; alarms the councils; spreads a diffidence; confuses even the most simple affairs, and makes them miscarry even before they are set a foot.

LXXI.

One must have more capacity to strike out into a new branch of trade, than to grow rich in that trade when once established.

It is a fair wager of two to one, that he who first laid the scheme cannot grow rich in it, and that he who grows rich in it, will not be able to bring it to perfection.

A minister will hardly find any thing among monied men but money. The greatest part of merchants have but two or three maxims, the painful fruits of a long course of experience. They have but one way of surveying objects. If they are deceived in their first judgment, they do not recover; we must wait till an unhappy experience opens their eyes when they are ruined.

A man of quality, who has a genius for business, will always understand a project of trade better than an experienced merchant. The genius of business comprehends every thing, sees every thing: The
genius

genius of the merchant seldom passes the bounds of his private interest.

It is therefore as useless to consult merchants upon projects of a great extent, as it is prudent to consult them on certain particulars, of which they are competent judges, and of which even they alone are capable to judge.

One excess is corrected only by another: formerly nothing was communicated to them, because they were considered only as mere pieces of clockwork, fitted up only to get money; at present they are consulted in every thing, as if all the prudence and capacity in the world had taken refuge only in their counting-houses, tho' it be clearly proved that all their skill and knowledge consist only in a little reflexion, and a long custom of walking in a particular road.

Flattered to see themselves almost necessary to the administration, they have attempted to figure it in the world; and they have gone almost so far as to persuade us that their profession is noble. They had a right indeed to some consideration; but they

they have had the assurance to pretend to that respect which is the only recompence reserved for capacity, virtue, and signal services; so that this order of men, very little considered by our forefathers, are in too high reputation at present.

The man of quality, covered with blood, with sweat and with dust, meets every where in his way a set of rivals who glory in not being like him. He sees that honour is a chimera, poverty ridiculous, noble sentiments unrespectable, a great name a kind of crime: how can he help crying out in a just fit of indignation? Hence ye wretched rivals: I have left you riches; but I have reserved honours for myself. Pay a proper deference to this only patrimony I have reserved, or I will chastise your insolence.

The sure method to stifle generous sentiments, the love of one's country, the attachment to the prince, in short to dry up the sources of great virtues, is to countenance the merchant, to humble the gentry. Do you desire to reign only over groveling souls? oppress the ancient nobility, but do not give them successors: for such is the pre-

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valency

valency of this chimera, that you would be soon forced to have recourse to the like oppression: you desire only slaves; and that would be saying to futurity: ‘ Give birth ‘ to heroes,’ *Epistles to the king by Mar-montel.*

Do not let me be accused of debasing trade, and those that carry it on. How can that be my intention, who am persuaded, that all men of capacity have one common point of perfection and equality; who am acquainted with so many generous souls, whom interest has not spoiled, and whose humane hearts an act of benevolence never solicited in vain, and who have heard all Europe attest that the most able merchant in France, Mr. Du Verney, is at the same time a great statesman, and would be on occasion, a great warrior.

LXXII.

It belongs only to such as have a violent propensity to vice to practise great virtues.

LXXIII.

The first laws are for the most part defective, because they were made at the first erecting of societies, by the first men, and in the first ages.

The first kings were the legislators. Their laws are subject to a revival, because it is to be presumed, they were usurpers, and that an usurper makes laws for the security of his person, not for the people whom he enslaves.

All conquerors have made laws; philosophers only have made wise laws.

To make laws is the work of necessity, oftentimes the work of tyranny, sometimes the product of a moment. To reduce laws to a system is the work of benevolence and philosophy.

A code, whose form was systematical and the foundation not so, a code, where every thing was abridged, because nothing had been sifted; a code, where one should lay down equitable rules, and yet declare that he still reserved himself a right of abolishing them; without fixing the bounds of the

arbitrary, a code where the professor or the chancellor appeared in every page, where we expected to find the great prince, would be no admirable code. It might however be so comparatively.

That would be an admirable work, where were laid open the principles of the law of nature, the law of nations, the civil law, and the different relations, which the laws bear to the constitution, the genius, the trade, the religion, the manners of each people. What courage ought not one to have who attempts this task, who surveys its vastness, without being discouraged! What a genius must there be to chuse, amidst so great a variety of materials, what is most suitable to raise this edifice! What wisdom to conduct it to its perfection. I don't break out into this extasy for a mere imagination. This work, far from being a whim of the brain, actually exists for the honour of human nature. *L'Esprit des Loix* is the code of all nations, and the president de Montesquieu is the legislator of the world. It is without exception the most valuable present

present that a man could confer upon his fellow-creatures.

Some readers do not find there either order, or principles, or good sense; some people do not observe either order or contrivance or wisdom in the most perfect masterpieces of the divine productions.

Nothing perhaps reflects greater honour on our age, than the favourable reception that book has met with. Could the author have expected it after having contradicted so many prejudices? How glorious a thing is it to have no other enemies but slaves and devotees!

If there be faults in that piece, I dare advance that they never will be discovered by any who at the same time won't be forced to acknowledge, that it is one of the finest that was ever penned.

LXXIV.

One cannot give a deeper wound to the honour of a state than to prefer a plebeian to gentlemen of equal merit. And there

is no more honour left in a state where the plebeian is preferred because he is a plebeian. A prince should protect the nobility for the same reason that he should defend his own rights.

If it is a *chimera* he should respect it, because he should respect the *chimera* by which he reigns.

Princes who humble the nobility are guilty of a contradiction: They would make their subjects believe that birth does not give little privileges, and persuade them at the same time that it confers the greatest of all. They forget that they owe their power and right of commanding to the same principles which give the nobility the right of being the first subjects.

The question is not to examine, whether those principles are true or false: they are established, and usefully established; the question is therefore decided. A philosophical prince laughs at them, and conforms to them. How great must be the despair of a brave and generous spirit who says: I am prevented from defending a throne which my fore-fathers have founded. I date my
services

services to the monarchy from the first moment of its erection, and yet I am thought no more capable of serving it than this wretch who sprung last night from the dunghill.

What are the privileges which the nobility are so desirous of having perserved to them? Why, that of flying to engagements, of daring death, of being poor without infamy, of acquiring glory, of sacrificing ever thing to honour, of forming, enterprizing, and executing the greatest projects, without any other recompence than a little praise and a few laurels.

The noblest of the sovereign houses in the world is the most powerful, only because it knew better than any other the value of a gentleman.

The safety and honour of France once depended on the city of Metz : it is besieged, it is without defence, without fortifications, the king throws into Metz a thousand gentlemen : Metz is impregnable : Metz is the rock on which the forces of two powerful empires and the glory of one of the greatest princes was wrecked.

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‘ We are all gentlemen,’ said Henry the IVth publickly at court. The project of the christian republic has existed perhaps only in memoirs, but Henry the great might think it possible to a nobility to whom he spoke with so much grandeur and simplicity.

Lewis the XVth was well acquainted with the main springs of his empire, when by his edict for creating a military nobility he multiplied a body, whom you may deprive of life, but whom you cannot deprive of honour ; whom you may cut to pieces, but whom you cannot put to flight.

It was the same knowledge, and the same principle that gave birth to the edict for erecting a military school, where five hundred gentlemen shall learn the great art of heroes, under the inspection of wisdom, and at the expence of luxury and idleness.

A foundation comparable to the invalids, if any thing can be comparable to a foundation which in all appearance must have fallen, and yet has supported itself. It was humanity that built the hotel of the invalids: and it was the deepest politics that erected

erected the military school. No other but Lewis the XVth could so well imitate Lewis the XIVth.

A great man is often mortified for not being of an illustrious family. A greater man is proud of the meanness of his birth. Tully was sorry that he was not born a patrician ; Marius gloried in being descended from the dregs of the people.

A king who won't protect his nobles, will never favour such as deserve to be of the number.

These great names which you have a thousand times admired in the history of your country, and which you have never heard pronounced in your court, are not yet extinct. They are the only inheritance of their descendants, confined in their woods, which they make their glory, their occupation, their misery, and their despair. These sentiments of honour seem extinguished ; one word, one look from the prince will kindle them up into new flame. Then you will behold prodigies of zeal and valour ; you will see generosity rise from the bosom of oppression. The nobility

crushed is ever ready to forgive, to conquer, and to die.

The creations of nobility so rare formerly, are now grown common, because the principle of interest has not yet entirely stifled the principle of honour, which it has succeeded.

When the late king of Sardinia said, ' of all the grandees that you see at my court there is not one gentleman: fifty years hence there won't be one plebeian;' he spoke in the stile of his age. When Lewis the XIth shewed a public contempt for a person whom he singularly considered before he had granted him a patent of nobility, he thought in the manner of that age; and that age thought as a king.

It was Italy which had the first ideas of hereditary nobility: it was Italy that gave the last blow to that system in 1750. See the Gazettes of that time.

The laws against duelling have not in themselves weakened the principle of honour; but have forced that principle to yield to other causes that attacked it.

In

In a country where there yet remains any honour, there are still many resources for a man of condition. What advantages has not the Count de W—z—r over his ignoble competitors, he who adds to the splendor of his family the courage of twenty gentlemen, the experience of twenty upstarts, and the capacity of twenty plebeians.

The nobility which murmurs most against fortune, and against the dispensers of favours, is such as can only oppose past services to present merit.

LXXV.

Religion, wisdom, industry, frugality, and œconomy establish the most flourishing common-wealth. It need only maintain what it had acquired. The supreme magistracy was committed to a man of wisdom and virtue, but of an indolent cast, and limited understanding. The marine is neglected, commerce decays, manners are corrupted, the fathers of the people become their tyrants, the finances are ill managed: indolence reigned thirty years, and Holland was no more.

There must be whole ages of activity to raise an empire. There needs only one day of indolence to overturn it.

The people recall the remembrance of their happiness; they intend to end their oppression, and they put on end to their liberty. To recover their principles they have recourse to the most certain means of destroying them. They see the hand that can rescue them, but do not discern the hand that intends to chain them.

LXXVI.

Academies have proposed prizes for the solution of a problem, for the best ode, for the most eloquent speech: no state has proposed any for the farmer who should produce the most copious crop, for the workman who carried farthest his industry, for the artist who should invent the most simple and convenient machine.

LXXVII.

You have not time to think of every thing, do not therefore discourage such as think. It is not less glorious to discern beauty

beauty and perfection, than to invent them.

It is harder to judge of some projects, than to form them : one must have more capacity and more knowledge to judge with solidity, than to go astray with ingenuity.

LXXVIII.

The French are at present less hated, because they are less feared, but are they less formidable ?

Never were the English more loved, because they were never so well known.

The French and English have divided Europe between them, which of the two have acted the most conspicuous part ?

The last century was the age of France, the present is the age of England.

Lewis the XIVth was arrived at universal monarchy, that is, to such a degree of power as enabled him alone to make head against all. The English will acquire it in their turn. This will be the case, when under the shadow of the jealousies they shall raise against France, as she herself had raised against the house of Austria, they shall have

have so far improved their marine and trade, as to engross to themselves all the riches of Europe.

The universal monarchy of England will be more durable, because it will be more solid; and it will be more solid because it will be more slow. In some respects it will be more equitable, because a nation of kings is generous. In others more weighty, because this nation of kings will be at the same time a nation of merchants. And in other respects more humbling, for nothing is so haughty as the empire of the sea.

Lewis the XIVth did not come to that short instant of universal monarchy, but by oppressing his subjects during the whole course of his reign. England will come to it by enriching her people; the one took the direct high road of despotism, the other will pass through the untrodden paths of liberty.

No other idea could fill up the greatness of Lewis the XIVth's soul: the courtier fed this inclination, the ministry laid the plan, valour, in concert with wisdom executed it. England will rise to a higher pitch of power,
without

without any concerted design. The frame of its constitution will carry it thither, and the indolence of other nations will favour its constitution. She must become mistress of Europe, without having formed the project of being so; astonished at the extent of her own power, she will be convinced of it only by the apprehensions of all her neighbours, by their submission to her imperious oracles, and by their impotent leagues.

The blindness of some states is beyond conception. They take umbrage at the ambitious pretensions of an empire which must be exhausted of men and money, for the conquest of a province; and they are not alarmed at the progress of a people, who every ten years acquire, without any struggle the revenues of a rich province. Is not he alone the true monarch of the world, who carries on its trade?

LXXIX.

It would be an object worthy of the attention of the Abbe de St. Pierre, to come to a mutual agreement, that during

a war trade might be open between the parties engaged. They might take proper measures in peace to reconcile their respective interests. It is so hard a matter to calculate which of the two is most likely to lose by the interruption of trade, that it would be, methinks, more advisable to continue it. By that means the subjects would be in a better capacity of supporting the taxes that would be necessary in the pressing conjunctures and exigencies of the state. This convention that princes should fall upon, might be looked upon as a consequence of that inestimable law of nations, which the antients were quite ignorant of. The manners would be softened by it, at least such an agreement would be a proof of it, and its consequences the confirmation of it. And war would become as little war as possible.

Do not let us dissemble that there would ensue two inconveniences from this regulation; first, that wars would continue much longer, because of the great resources which the insatiable ambition of princes would not fail to lay hold on: and secondly, that they
would

would be more bloody, and that we should endeavour to drain a state of men which we could not drain of its money, and mankind should be the victim of avarice.

LXXX.

A long residence at court gives an air of wit to a man who is very foolish at the bottom, and an appearance of honesty to a man who is a great rogue in reality.

LXXXI.

None that was to see this courtier so accustomed to obey, would ever imagine that he is proper for command : but this is a false judgment. In the world one may judge boldly of men by their appearance : but this rule will not hold at court. We must not there judge methodically of men, but must only guess at them. Who would believe that this timorous courtier is an intrepid warrior, that the man who shudders at one look of the prince, makes an army of a hundred thousand tremble, a creeping insect at Versailles, a soaring eagle in the plains of Fontenoy ?

LXXXII.

LXXXII.

A weak head, and a mean heart, are soon out of humour with the world; but with health and sensibility, that is, with the proper qualifications for the world, the more we know it, the more we must like it.

But it is not so at court. The philosopher should go there only to examine the sport of human passions: it is the true scene of deep reflexions. Chance there performs nothing, artifice and prudence conduct every thing in this country, which we may look upon at once as the theatre of politicks, and as the domain of fortune.

One may love the world, because one may still discover virtue in it: and we may hate the court, because if there is any virtue there, we must guess it.

The court and virtue are contradictory terms. If there were virtue at court, the court could no longer subsist, as it could not subsist without manners, which are as it were the shadows of virtue.

The

The courtier's aim is his fortune, and therefore the main spring of the court is interest.

The court is without troubles and agitations, as long as the prince is an honest man.

If he is weak and vicious, he is the sport of waves and storms, and the impotent spectator of the struggles of courtiers, who are often forced to bend, and who recover almost as soon as they are overturned.

In this age of good sense, we have bid fair for redressing all known abuses. There is only the ceremonial that has escaped reformation. Are trifles then so essential to princes? I believe that this owes the continuance of its tiresome privileges to the fear of exciting the murmurs of the courtiers, a people (who could think it) of all others the most refractory, and the most satirical. The ceremonial is the slavery of princes; how jaded must they be, in the evening, with the compliments, with the farce, and with the servitude of the morning.

There now reigns in Europe a man who has neither court nor council?

One

One must be very great of himself, and very sure of his own wisdom, to forego with success two things that constitute the greatness and the wisdom of most kings.

I said that this man reigned in Europe, because he is the man of the age.

LXXXIII.

Every prince whose reputation is only problematical will live but in the history of his own country. The Antoninus's have quite exhausted the sources of great reputations and virtues.

LXXXIV.

The most agreeable laws that a king can give his people, are such as are most severe against oppressors.

LXXXV.

A state is happy where the king has no other favourite than his people. A state is more happy when the favourite of the prince is the advocate of the people, the friend of virtue and protector of trade. A state is infinitely happy when the qualities
and

and conduct of the favourite represent to the subjects the monarchs mind, and that the whole kingdom sees in him an accomplished soul.

XXXVI.

To replace a bad minister, the prince need only consult himself; to replace a good one he must consult the public, and fix upon him who is unanimously pointed out to him by the voice of the people. This maxim I have taken from the conduct of a great prince, who thought he could not properly repair a great loss, but by chusing the person whom the court and the city, his subjects and foreigners fixed their eyes upon. A minister the more valuable, as it was necessary to get the better of his philosophy, and that one may justly apply to him these beautiful lines of Claudian :

—————Doluit fortuna minorem
Se confessa viro : magnum delata potestas ,
Majorem contempta probat.

LXXXVII.

In France the king never signs. That custom is derived from Charles the IXth, who was used to say to Villeroi who came to offer him papers to sign when he was playing at tennis, 'Sign, father, sign for me.'

This custom has its inconveniences : it gives too extensive a scope to the secretary of state's power, and opens a wide gap to surreptitious orders ; it may arm the police with certain acts of power with which it should never have been intrusted : the kingdom may be governed tyrannically, and the king know nothing of the matter. The abuses of *Letters de Cachet* may be multiplied, and a clerk of the secretary of state's office may abuse the confidence reposed in him by the secretary.

These inconveniencies are compensated by numberless advantages. The inconveniencies are only in prospect, but the advantages are actually present. The prince disengaged from an act that is purely mechanical, and which the last of his subjects can perform

perform as well as himself, can appropriate to affairs of importance, and such as cannot well be executed without him, a time which had been misemployed in signing his name. This custom extends the power of the ministers, and in that respect it is excellent, because extending it only in trifles, the prince is no longer embarrassed about the choice of his business; he has only the regulation of such as are important, and they cut off only what is unworthy of him; besides, how could a king of France avoid being surprised in such cases? Would it not be equally easy for private persons and for ministers to make him sign what they pleased? Could he read papers which he could not sign in a whole day? Add to this, that as all is entered on the precedent book, it would be a very difficult matter for secretaries of state to prevaricate; and being by this means the more subject to a revisal, every portion of confidence reposed in them, is a diminution of the yoke, which can neither be long, nor burdensome in a state where the exercise of authority, is divided into many hands. The right of signing for the king is so small
a matter,

a matter, that the ministers leave it always to their clerks.

What I have here advanced does not hinder this custom from being extremely bad in every state where the three powers meet in the person of one alone, and that the contrary custom, whenever it is practicable, is not infinitely preferable. It is to be presumed that a prince always employed will not fall asleep on the throne, or that his slumber will be but short. The necessity he has laid himself under of applying to lesser affairs, will always remind him of the greater.

These reflexions introduce this other: there are states where it is proper for the king to sign nothing, and there are others where it is fit he should set his hand to every thing.

LXXXVIII.

It is above ten years that the women maintain that Cloe is decayed, and that the men acknowledge that she decays. However Cloe still reigns, and reigns alone.

LXXXIX.

LXXXIX.

The last century shewed Europe a very striking phænomenon. One saw a young lady, without protection, triumph over a powerful faction. A lady without beauty please a delicate court; a lady, without understanding govern a state where she was a foreigner; a lady without principle boldly disperse her supreme orders twice a week through all the provinces. A lady without ambition rise to the highest degree of favour. A lady without affection ruin her credit by a marriage that increased it.

XC.

It is a rarity to find above one minister of state, even in such countries as have not, nor never had a prime minister.

XCI.

The prince must hear, decide, and govern. And his ministers propose, speak, and set their hands.

Timor & Deus ille Deorum.

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A prince is governed when he is not apprehensive of being so: he is governed when he has no genius for business, and has a taste for pleasures: he is governed when he cannot hide his foibles from the penetration of his ministers: he is governed when one head of his council has gained a certain ascendancy over the other heads: he is governed when he answers in the affirmative to the following question: *Am I happy for being a king?* Is it an easy matter to be so?

This is decisive, and the infallible touchstone. A king is inclined to let himself be governed when he finds himself weary of being king, but when that weariness goes off he is actually governed.

In the North kings have always governed more by themselves, than in the South; because there has been always more reason on the people's side, and less power on the prince's.

Excessive power produces the same effects as excessive servitude. That is, it overloads the kings of the South, who are always subjects to their slaves, abandon the care
of

of their empire for the same reason that a farmer abandons the tillage of his ground.

XCII.

Mr. Law's project was excellent in itself; but it was badly executed: it was badly begun, because it was specified in the ordinance for the creation of bank bills, that private persons should take them, but that the king should not take them. This establishment was founded only on confidence, and they began by destroying all confidence.

The order of the 27th of February 1720, fixed at 500 livres the sum of money that every private person was to keep in his hands; and the declaration of the 11th of March in the same year, abolished the use of gold coin. And why so?

Risum teneatis, amici.

' To procure the diminution of the price
' of provisions, to support the public credit,
' to facilitate circulation, and increase
' trade.' From whence it follows clearly,
that to encrease trade, we must begin by
ruining it, and that to facilitate circulation,

we must keep up as little of the materials of circulation as possible.

That this project has been formed is not what surprizes me, every thing must pass through the imagination; or that it has been approved, for an artful man may put off many other absurdities; but that people should so far forget themselves as to offer reasons in its behalf, and such wretched reasons too, this is what exceeds all comprehension.

The sovereign here turns Sophist; but this logick which would be excellent in a council, where the business is always to invent expedients, without reflecting on the consequences, is of no weight with the merchant and the citizen.

Besides, Mr. Law attacks here the value of goods, in attacking the value of their representative sign; so true it is, that in order to overturn the constitution, we must destroy all our ideas! It is astonishing that the greatest promoter of despotism in France should have been brought up in the very bosom of liberty.

Law,

Law, for the good of France, should never have set his foot in it, or never should have left it. That great genius, instructed by his faults, and brought to himself by his misfortunes, would have re-assumed his calculations with success. He alone could occasion the ills he did, and he alone could repair them; he was born for the regent, and the regent was so for him: he can be reproached only with too much precipitation in his enterprize, and an excess of mistaken zeal for the service of his master. He had a design to annihilate all the intermediate subordinate powers.

Debut hoc saltem non licuisset tibi.

XCIII.

France at present accuses one of her ministers of the same design. But this minister has too much understanding to give any just ground to such suspicions; for both interest and prudence should direct the controller general to respect the present constitution, which the keeper of the seals ought to support by virtue of his office.

The object that monsieur Machault had in view, seems to be only to establish and augment the public credit: and how much would not the destruction of intermediate powers prejudice this design? France would have been utterly ruined; the king would pass rapidly from a state of accidental power to a state of real weakness; he would acquire momentary riches, and would fall into eternal poverty.

This minister is too judiciously attached to the interest, and to the glory of his prince to commit really, under the shadow of some specious reasons, a crime of high treason, for I dare affirm it would be such, to strike at the being of the bodies that are guardians of the laws. He is sensible that a king is great enough in confining himself to a general inspection; and that he would only have a borrowed power, by governing every thing immediately by himself.

He is far from thinking like those ministers, who extend the authority of their master only to extend their own.

The

The more power a prince enjoys, I mean that power which is independant of the laws, the less safe he is.

And this so true, that even in the countries where the power of the sovereign is the most extensive, it is a constant maxim of the ministry to conduct themselves as if it were not so: they are as attentive to the preservation of these rights, as they are cautious in the execution of them.

The excess of power may flatter a little mind: a wise man will always prefer a moderate one to it. Absolute authority is, if you please, admirable in theory, but it is very pernicious in the practice. And what is arbitrary power good for, if its effects turn against those that exercise it?

It would be therefore betraying the king of France to persuade him that he can, or that he ought to pass the bounds that he has prescribed himself, by destroying those political bodies which prevent his power from becoming excessive.

Suppose those troublesome bodies who are always throwing in difficulties, were to be deprived of the right of making remon-

strances, which are really suspensions of power, what would be the result of such dispositions? The disaffection of the people, who struck with these alterations, would be apprehensive of something more fatal, and from whom one must violently extort the taxes that they would pay of their own accord: the enlarging of the power of the council, who will oppress, if they think proper, the subjects; without fearing that the cries of the miserable, and the groans of the provinces will reach the throne: the certainty of impunity in a bad administration, and consequently the oppression of the state: the discredit of the public funds at home and abroad; at home, where one will see every thing conducted according to the caprice of one man, and abroad where it will be apprehended that even the best established honesty may be carried away by particular circumstances. The unlimited extortions of officers, who are supported by judges who are indulgent, and their accomplices: the overturning of the laws, by the transport which must be made of that important trust to the council of state, who

who cannot be proper guardians of them, because they neither can, nor will understand them: the destruction of all legal authority by the destruction of all those canals by which it descends: the impossibility of bringing back the people to their duty in times of confusion, for want of a body whom they can confide in: the necessity of having recourse to violent methods to secure obedience, and of turning the arms of the citizen against the citizen: Troubles in times of a minority by the difficulty of fixing a regency, and of maintaining it against the enterprizes of the discontented and ambitious: in a word, the loss of all the advantages that have made France the first kingdom of the world.

Whenever the 'parliament exerts itself in vigorous remonstrances, it immediately comes into people's head to 'deprive them of this right of remonstrating, of verifying, of registering, of confirming; but we are not aware that it is these sage delays that moderate the vivacity necessary to councils: so that too enterprizing ministers have by this means proper persons to watch over their conduct,

to stop their career, and to lead them back to reflexion, and to the consideration of the public good. And that if sovereign bodies did not preserve the right of remonstrating, the misery that the state would fall into would soon hinder the council from passing any edict that had any need of remonstrances. Let us not deceive ourselves; it is this right, this faculty of hindering excessive taxes, that puts the prince in a condition of laying, and of raising excessive ones.

The parliament of Paris has conducted itself for near these two years with a firmness and prudence, which have obtained them the thanks of their prince, the affection of all true Frenchmen, and the esteem of all Europe.

I have just received the speech of the first president to the king, and the chancellor's answer in regard to the resolution the parliament came to last month, to beseech his majesty to set bounds to his private and personal expences. I shall subjoin here the two pieces; they will serve to confirm my reflexions, and relieve my reader from the

the dry manner in which I have delivered them.

‘ Sire ! You have commanded, and your
 ‘ parliamēt has obeyed. Accountable for
 ‘ our conduct to the justest of kings, we
 ‘ are not afraid that the representations we
 ‘ have made to your majesty, and which
 ‘ have retarded the effect of our compliance,
 ‘ shall be imputed as a want of obedience.

‘ There is, sire, a primitive obedience,
 ‘ to which you have been pleased we should
 ‘ bind ourselves by the solemnity of an
 ‘ oath; that is to represent to you every
 ‘ thing we conceive conducive to your
 ‘ service, and the interest of your subjects,
 ‘ always inseparable from your own.

‘ When we do so, we, on the contrary,
 ‘ give you the most authentic proof of our
 ‘ submission, in fulfilling the duty which
 ‘ you have imposed on us yourself, and
 ‘ from which no particular consideration
 ‘ shall ever make us depart. Such are,
 ‘ Sire, the principles which have ever regu-
 ‘ lated the steps of your parliament.

‘ *Submissive subjects, but loyal subjects too,*
 ‘ we shall always have the boldness to lay

‘ before you the truth ; and pardon us, Sire,
 ‘ if we tell you, that there are even occa-
 ‘ sions where conscience may require of us,
 ‘ to make our actual obedience yield to
 ‘ that primitive obedience which we owe
 ‘ you.

‘ The verification of the last edict sent
 ‘ to your parliament, appeared to us to be
 ‘ one of the occasions wherein we were to
 ‘ weigh those two considerations to which
 ‘ our duty obliges us.’

‘ But encouraged by your wisdom, we
 ‘ could not doubt, but that penetrated with
 ‘ the importance of the reflexions we set
 ‘ before your eyes, you would from that mo-
 ‘ ment take the most necessary measures to
 ‘ prevent the evils which the successive aug-
 ‘ mentation of the debts of the state in peace-
 ‘ able times makes us foresee.

‘ So far were you, Sire, from desiring to
 ‘ contract new ones, that you promised
 ‘ yourself, in establishing the twentieth
 ‘ penny, to abolish from year to year a part
 ‘ of the old ; and you gave your subjects
 ‘ hopes that you will speedily discharge
 ‘ them of that rigorous imposition, by
 ‘ ap-

‘ applying a part of your ordinary revenues, sufficient to satisfy those views of prudence and œconomy that you had proposed yourself : a project truly worthy of your royal goodness.

‘ But, sire, the yearly expences are carried to so exorbitant a height, that your ordinary revenues augmented not only with the produce of almost all the taxes which took place during the war, but even by the accession of the twentieth penny during peace, are not sufficient to defray them.

‘ This is, Sire, what has determined your parliament to commission us to beseech you, with the most respectful solicitations, to examine, whether by retrenching some expences it might not be possible to favour the execution of a project, which the regard to your own glory, the good of the state, and the love of your subjects have inspired you with.’

This speech seems to me a master-piece of wisdom, of eloquence, and of resolution : these words *submissive subjects, but loyal subjects too*, say a great deal, and present a very comprehensive and very luminous principle.

principle. The entire idea of the constitution of the French monarchy is included in this equally wise and bold distinction, between the rights of actual, and primary obedience. The chancellor answered extempore,

‘ The king will be always disposed to give a favourable reception to such proofs as his parliament shall endeavour to give him, of their zeal for his service, and the good of the state.

‘ But his majesty cannot perceive these dispositions in the manner in which they have proceeded in the registering of his edict for the creation of annuities, and pensions on the post-office.

‘ For besides the interruptions of the execution of his repeated orders, his majesty has observed with surprize, that in the deliberations of the parliament, concerning the registering of this edict, they have treated of matters which are wholly foreign to the purpose, and have discussed such only as did not properly fall under their cognizance.

‘ His majesty’s intention is therefore, that they should confine themselves to the exa-

‘ mi-

‘ mination of the edicts that shall be laid be-
 ‘ fore them, without exceeding the bounds
 ‘ of the authority that he is pleased to en-
 ‘ trust them with.

‘ His majesty expressly disapproves his
 ‘ parliament’s having endeavoured to infi-
 ‘ nueate, that the sums arising from the im-
 ‘ position of the twentieth penny, were em-
 ‘ ployed to other purposes, than that for
 ‘ which his majesty had originally intended
 ‘ them, as if it were permitted to raise
 ‘ doubts about the fidelity of such engage-
 ‘ ments as his majesty chuses to contract.

‘ The mere casting an eye on the edict for
 ‘ establishing the sinking fund, the disposi-
 ‘ tions that his majesty has ordered to be in-
 ‘ serted there, and their execution by public
 ‘ payments to this very day, must destroy
 ‘ every pretext of so groundless an assertion,
 ‘ to which only the ignorance of facts could
 ‘ serve as an excuse, if any excuse could be
 ‘ alledged in the like circumstance.

‘ If the apprehension of this new loan’s
 ‘ sinking the credit of the finances had
 ‘ any reality, was it not their duty to
 ‘ employ every method in their power to
 ‘ open.

‘ open the eyes of the public, and undeceive
 ‘ them of so false a notion; the way of
 ‘ remonstrances, and multiplied representa-
 ‘ tions was not what this duty should have
 ‘ suggested.

‘ His majesty expects, that his parliament
 ‘ will for the future find means of proving
 ‘ their zeal for his service by testimonies,
 ‘ with which he shall have more room to be
 ‘ contented, and for which it shall be in
 ‘ his power to shew them some marks of his
 ‘ satisfaction.’

This answer is, such as it should be.
 Upon the report that monsieur de Maupeou
 made of it to the court, they came to a
 resolution truly becoming themselves.

It was therefore unanimously resolved, to
 register the speech of the first president,
 and the king's answer, and that the court
 persisting in their arret of registering passed
 the 29th of May, and in their particular
 determination of the said day, should still
 continue to give to their foresaid lord the
 king the same proofs of the zeal with which
 they are animated for the public good upon
 all occasions, and as often as their duty,

and

and the circumstances shall permit it. The
19th of June, 1751.

These proceedings of the parliament, are very different from the act that the senate passed in favour of Augustus, in the year of Rome 728. By this decree 'they granted 'him an exemption from all the ties of the 'laws, so as never to be obliged either to 'do what he did not like, or not to do 'what he did like.' a privilege granted in the midst of peace, which should have been refused even in times of confusion, where it would seem to be more necessary; a privilege which Augustus made no bad use of, but which the stupid senate should have foreseen that his successors would most cruelly abuse.

Some foreigners, little acquainted with the constitution of the French monarchy, have advanced, and printed, that the parliament of Paris was nothing at the bottom but a Court of justice. But be it known to them, that of the twelve parliaments of France, there is not one which is not infinitely superior to any court of Justice whatsoever.

When

When I advanced, that the excess of power was prejudicial, I had no intention to speak of all other states. I spoke of a country; that has 3700 cities and towns, and twenty-five million of inhabitants.

XCIV,

The administration of the finances, constitutes the greatness of a state. This part of the ministry, attracts all the rest to itself. A dexterous comptroller general will give what bias he pleases to all business, will decide in council without being admitted, will conduct every thing according to his particular designs, without appearing to have any hand in the matter.

Whoever will rule must secure this place: one is certain of being absolute, when he carries thither that reputation of disinterestedness, which engages the heart, and that reputation of dexterity that captivates the understanding.

Observe what influence the empire that monsieur Machault exercised over general affairs gave him in particular ones. He knows alone the forces, and the resources of the

the state ; he alone can find out the means of augmenting them ; he alone can foresee events, because he can make himself master of them.

What an important post must that be, which decides the destiny of an empire, which can enrich opulence, or impoverish even indigence itself, make a Turenne a blunderer ; of a paultry general, a Demetrius Poliorcetes ; and of an embassador without capacity, a consummate negociator.

When I see a minister of the finances apply himself to those minute trifles that naturally fall within the reach of little understandings, I could find in my heart to say to him ; less timidity, and more expedition. Leave that detail to your secretary : let him fly near the earth, it is for you to take a bolder flight ; you stop at a rivulet, and you have large rivers to pass : the least difficulty affrights you, you who should boldly tread the brow of the precipice, and with an undaunted eye measure its depth.

When a comptroller general is accused of tyranny by the people, he is guilty only of severity ; when he accused of severity, he

he is in reality only resolute: but when he is accused of embezzling, he is certainly guilty.

XCV.

The English are at present reputed to understand the management of the finances better than any other people: it is their constitution that understands it for them.

Their calculations are very simple; their operations have nothing marvellous: but unluckily for mankind it is marvellous that any nation should perform them, because there is only one that does.

The management of the finances in England, has exactly as many degrees of superiority over that of the finances in France, as the constitution of England has degrees of liberty above the French government. It is a general rule, that the public revenues are better or worse administered, as the people is more or less free.

The solidity of the English credit, furnishes that nation with a means of drawing immense riches from a method of borrowing, that must ruin a private person. In France a loan creates a debt, and often times a
want;

want; in England a loan always extinguishes a want, and at the same time begets an income.

How can the English be at a loss of raising money in pressing exigences? The paper of the public funds is amongst them converted into merchandise and money.

A nation is very powerful when all Europe is interested in its property, and England is in that situation, a situation in which it has no rival.

An experience of two hundred years convinces us that republican debts are not much more secure than monarchical ones. This experience proves nothing against the republic of England, because its principal aim is not to resemble, in that particular, either republicks or monarchies.

France begins to rise in credit; but what a wide difference there is between both nations! France does not diminish her taxes, and borrows at five and six per cent. England lowers the interest, and abolishes the taxes.

Notwithstanding the advantageous notions that Europe was to conceive after the last war,

war, of the credit of France, it is morally impossible that it should ever come near that of England, because it is founded only on the honesty of the prince, whereas that of England is built upon the interest of the people: now interest is always a motive more solid, and more proper to gain confidence than honesty.

XCVI.

A man in power, jealous of his reputation and glory, should never forget, that actions which are admirable, whilst the prince is upon the throne, become crimes from the instant he is laid in his grave.

XCVII.

Sir Robert Walpole was one of those superior genuises, that let people talk.

Great politicians never deprive men of their right of grumbling, of a song, or an epigram, who will condescend to rest contented with it.

To be worthy of governing, one must love the people, and learn to despise them. Can any love those they despise?

XCVIII.

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XCVIII.

The happiness of the three trading nations of Europe consists in there being a nation in the world, proper to possess uselessly the greatest treasures.

XCIX.

There is in the North a nation which manufactures admirably well the gold which it does not produce, and cannot manufacture the iron which is their own produce.

C.

Wit is serviceable only to such as have no great destiny to fulfil : it enlivens conversation. Good sense is necessary to such as have the first parts to act : it makes the whole life illustrious.

CI.

A king without a mistress is particularly valuable : if at the same time he is no devotee.

CII.

CII.

A man of quality who is rich, penetrating, and virtuous, is not a private man in any state. .

CIII.

It is the superiority of forces that gives absolute power : it is manners that prevent it from becoming arbitrary : manners govern princes. •

CIV.

There are few faultless lives in detail, great men are so only in the lump.

CV.

Such a man appears great when he is detached, who sinks to nothing when he enters into the croud. It is very difficult to rise above the common level, in a country where one is not out of the reach of comparisons.

CVI.

Where you do not see those persons who are esteemed, in great request, and caressed by every body, tho' they have no connexions,

ions, tho' they have made no interest to advance themselves, you may boldly pronounce, that there is no talents in that country.

CVII.

An African king is a God with an African. And with an European merchant, this God is scarce a man.

I am of opinion an Englishman, that is thoroughly English, looks upon kings nearly in the same light that Solon looked upon Cræsus.

When I see, said a philosopher, the potentates of the earth, humbled, debased, my heart dilates with joy; methinks that enlarges my being. I see, for instance, with pleasure, in the Roman history, an emperor seated on a golden throne, habited like Jupiter Capitolinus, giving audience to the ambassadors of the Gauls, who having asked a tradesman whom he observed in their retinue what he thought of him, the Gallic shoe-maker replied, You appear to me to be an excessively ridiculous creature.

G

CVIII.

CVIII.

A man is often modest, only because he does not know how to be insolent.

A minister gives you an affable reception, because he has not the talent of giving you a haughty one. It is nature that confers upon people this gift of insulting politeness.

CIX.

That was a good project which was some years ago presented to a society for the reformation of manners at London : it consisted in obtaining an act of parliament for allotting a privileged quarter, where youth might follow their pleasures without danger.

Solon, if Atheneus is to be credited, kept, at the public expence, a place destined for the use of youth : he consecrated this institution by a temple dedicated to *Venus the Prostitute*. This was a sensible regulation. When abuses are necessary, it is better to restrain them by laws, than to abandon them to their own disorders. When one cannot destroy vice, we must at least endeavour to keep it within bounds.

The

The appellation of philosopher gives Solon the air of a citizen, and a pedant. He was notwithstanding one of the most amiable characters of antiquity, ‘ I am grown old, ‘ said he, in making daily my court to the ‘ Muses, to Bacchus, and to Venus, which ‘ are the only sources of the pleasure of ‘ mortals.’

CX.

To accommodate the ancient times to the modern, is the source of bad reasoning. We condemn the two Brutus’s; and it is not yet quite proved that we have a right to judge. It belongs only to men who know all the value of liberty, to decide whether it be glorious to sacrifice to liberty, either a father or children. To form a right judgment, says Montaigne, ‘ of great and noble ‘ things, we must have a soul of the same ‘ cast: otherwise we ascribe to them the ‘ vice that belongs to ourselves.’ The age, when luxury has enrevated every heart, cannot be properly qualified to judge of times when people went to cottages in search of merit.

All ages have not souls of the same vigour, because all ages have not the same government.

The principles of the Romans produced such powerful effects on their minds, that one might say they had souls of a different form. We have capacity, they had sentiment.

CXI.

Great reputation gives great power, and a good head gives always great reputation. Take a view of the princes of Orange.

CXII.

The difference that is paid to the capacity and virtues of a citizen, is what constitutes his peculiar nobility : Upon the privileges of this sort of nobility, it is allowable to insist upon all the punctilios and delicacies of the point of honour.

CXIII.

The politicians, moralists, and divines, have this common resemblance, that they propose to conduct men to perfection, and would be very sorry to see them arrive at it.

CXIV.

CXIV.

We commonly say of a person, that he is as cunning as a courtier ; but that is saying very little. Every station has its politics, its cunning, its stratagems, its courtiers, because it has its interests, and men that eagerly grasp at them. The famous Count of Guildenstein, that man, May, who at the age of an hundred years, had still perhaps more natural than acquired understanding, was in the right of it when he said, ‘ Policy, and conduct is ‘ equally in the possession of every body ; ‘ and my scullion is as much a politician as ‘ his master.’

CXV.

The reputation of a first minister is soon fixed after his death. It neither depends upon his creatures, nor upon his enemies : he is judged by a third party, which has neither their passions, nor their interests, nor their aversion, nor their gratitude.

As soon as cardinal Fleury had, by his death, given liberty to the judgments of France, the whole nation pronounced that

it was only in virtue of his first minister's place, that he had acquired the esteem and admiration due to great ministers. In the ideas of the mob, there is no difference between the first and the greatest.

A timorous spirit, tho' ambitious, more jealous of augmenting his own power than extending that of France, knowing the interests of the nation, but incapable of being directed by them; too much prejudiced to correct abuses; too much addicted to little passions, to be a proper manager of great affairs; deep in some bye-views, but without either plan or system for the whole; fond of glory, and averse to the true method of acquiring it; too attentive to the underparts, to succeed to the principal; observant of trifles, even to a degree of childishness; throwing authority into indirect courses; agreeable in conversation, by his sprightliness; able in negotiations by his eloquence; incapable of great enterprizes, by his timidity; master of a certain kind of cunning, not such as arises from the certainty of the success of the means, but of that sort that can find no resources but in such methods,

nor

nor that kind that becomes the dignity of a first minister, but such as may suit a courtier; supporting himself by the same ways that he had raised himself; a dupe to his friends, and not nice in the choice of his confidants, conversing with wit, and writing without genius; too diffident to be governed by one alone, too limited not to be so by many; at first disinterested, afterwards carrying into France the odious nepotism of the court of Rome; having but a slight taste for the sciences; and but superficial notions of trade and finances; in short, an agreeable companion, a shallow minister, a fluctuating mind, a weak heart. Such was cardinal de Fleury, too much esteemed by foreigners, to deserve any esteem among his countrymen.

The duke of Burgundy asked the abbé de Choisi, who was then collecting materials for the history of Charles the VIth, ‘What he should do to let the world know that that monarch was a madman.’ My lord, replied the abbé, without hesitation, ‘I will tell the world, that he was a mad-

G 4

‘ man.

' man. It is virtue alone that distinguishes
' men after their death.'

CXVI.

Man is never unhappy but thro' anxiety.

I would willingly retrench from my existence all my anxious moments; and by that means my life would be three quarters and a half curtail'd.

We say that life is short; if it were so, would the days seem so long.

A whole age of life without anxiety would be only a moment; it would be the shortest and happiest life.

What is being anxious? 'Tis perceiving that we live, and what is being happy? 'Tis the not reflecting that we exist.

From uniformity arises anxiety, anxiety gives birth to reflexion, reflexion creates a loathing of our existence, and this loathing brings on a misfortune which shortens them all.

The greatest possible happiness is alone equal to all others: a man therefore would be perfectly happy, if all his destin'd hap-

py

py moments were collected together and melted down into one. It does not follow from thence, that the greatest misery would be the union and sum total of all others reduced to one point: for all these misfortunes coming at once, would suspend the faculties of the soul, and would produce, in all likelihood, only a short instant of overwhelming sleep.

CXVII.

Under Augustus, the order of vestal virgins fell into disrepute, tho' there needed only six virgins to fill it up. The emperor left no stone unturned to keep up this institution; but admire the good sense of the Roman people: not one father, notwithstanding the extreme authority that the laws gave him, would devote his daughter to so difficult a function. And Augustus was obliged to confer upon the daughters of Freedmen a privilege reserv'd for the ancient nobility. At present Italy is quite peopled with virgins, formerly the whole Roman empire could not furnish six subjects.

The law that permits us to dispose of our liberty at fifteen, and that forbids us to dispose of our fortune before twenty five, contradicts itself.

Catholick princes ought unanimously to petition the Pope for the revocation of the law of celibacy impos'd on ecclesiasticks. This law may be abrogated by the same power that first enacted it ; is it to be presumed that the holy see would refuse an unanimous request? The suppression of celibacy is the only means of establishing a ballance between the catholick and the protestant powers.

It has been predicted, that in seven or eight hundred years, the Catholick religion would be quite extinct ; that may be the case, as it destroys itself. If that church understood her own interest aright, she would go to work another way for her propagation : she should leave to God the care of converting Infidels, and confine herself to augmenting the number of believers, by augmenting within her own pale the number of men.

If

If the law of celibacy was abolished, the ecclesiasticks would be the most happy of all mortals; they would have the handsomest, the most virtuous and the best educated wives. A hundred cities built in France by this new people would be almost as soon inhabited by industrious and sensible citizens.

The abolition of this law is too simple and too sensible a project to expect that all princes would come into it: but who should prevent the king of France from passing an edict to forbid indissoluble vows before the age requisite to make civil contracts valid. Such an edict would people the state and enrich the king, because the state would acquire the same number of single men that the church would lose, and because the king would then have a pretext to unite to his revenue the greatest part of the wealth of convents then deserted.

How should we dispose of our daughters, and of our younger sons, say they, in Catholick countries, if we had neither convents nor abbeys? Your daughters might

few, might spin, might go to service, and be married; your younger sons might be disposed of in tillage and manufactures, and in marriage. But says a woman of quality, My children are not destin'd for those mean employments; God forbid! But the prince, madam, has none of your passions; 'tis of little concern to him whether your children are plowmen or marechals of France. But it is of vast concern to him that they neither live in idleness nor in celibacy: you are determin'd by your private interest, he is governed by the publick good. Families complain of having too many children, but the state complains of having too few subjects; at least permit your daughter the choice of the monastery, or the gardiner of the monastery.

Convents of women begin to multiply in some protestant countries; if all acts of piety were less to be respected, I would say, like a good citizen, that it was better that the entire property of the lands allotted for such foundations was made over to those that cultivate them; or that the income arising from them were employed to portion
out

out every year a certain number of country girls or young gentlewomen. Every thing that diminishes the human species diminishes the good of the state ; and there is no country populous enough to admit of introducing expedients against marriage : and if people were absolutely determined to establish such foundations, the first article of the regulation should expressly specify, that they would admit only the old, the homely, the deformed, the lame, the hump-back'd, and even the squint-eyed.

CXVIII.

Protestants would sooner enrich a country, than an equal number of Catholics. The Catholick has above sixty days of rest, which are so many days of labour for the protestant.

CXIX.

The Pope, now reigning, is a man of great parts and a prince of excellent understanding, in the opinion even of protestants themselves : he might easily immortalize himself : the prince need only give free scope to the man.

CXX. 'Tis

CXX.

'Tis said, that had it not been for Descartes, we should not perhaps have had a Newton; and I say that Descartes himself had not been, were it not for Luther and Calvin.

Monf. de Voltaire has said over and over, that it was a melancholy reflexion, that men of such mean parts as Luther and Calvin had made so many proselytes, whilst Locke and Newton have gained so few. But he does not observe that Locke and Newton have had disciples only in those countries where Luther and Calvin had been followed, and that they are unknown wherever the doctrine of these mean geniuses is proscribed.

Socrates, Luther, Descartes, and Montesquieu are the persons to whom mankind lie under the highest obligations.

CXXI.

The Constitutions that saint Ignatius de Loyola gave his order, are a masterpiece of politicks; the world is not the least divided in opinion on that head; so that the laws
where

where there is most moderation and wisdom are the production of a reputed enthusiast and madman. Read his life, peruse his rule, and reconcile me that contradiction.

CXXII.

'Tis an advantage to think, a happiness to think in a regular train, but it would be still a greater happiness not to think at all.

You cannot imagine, said a thoughtful person, what a burden my soul is to me.

CXXIII.

If you had your choice to be a king for one year, or a woman for ten years, I mean a genteel, handsome, young and sprightly woman, which of the two would you prefer?

A sensible man of the last century acknowledged he had rather be madam de Montespan than Lewis the XIVth. Mæcenæ would not have made the least pause between Augustus and Julia.

CXXIV.

CXXIV.

Empty prattle is the most bewitching quality for a coxcomb; the reputation of good sense is what affects most sensibly the man of genius.

CXXV.

We may flatter those we despise, because we may believe them easily duped: we never flatter those that we esteem, because esteem respects, and flattery ridicules.

CXXVI.

The courtier, who conforms to the religion of his prince, offers him an injurious sacrifice, especially if the passage from the religion he forsakes to that which he embraces, is inconsiderable: for if the two religions were very different, one might in that case attribute to a conscientious motive, what in the other is visibly the effect of a servile complaisance.

A man may have the misfortune to look upon all religions with an indifferent eye, and the imprudence to acknowledge it, and have a right to refuse quitting the belief of his

his father: The rights of conscience are so sacred, that even he who has none may lay a claim to them. To refuse subscribing to the reigning religion, is not only refusing to be a hypocrite, but is also preserving the most essential privilege of liberty.

CXXVII.

Be always modest, never humble. Modesty makes us estimable in prosperity, humility renders us contemptible in adversity.

CXXVIII.

Fools love to mortify men of sense by presenting to them others that have still more sense than themselves: but if the distance is great from a superior genius to a man of the first parts, one may say that the distance is almost unmeasurable between a superior genius and a fool.

CXXIX.

The want of understanding in most women is entirely owing to their want of education.

They

They are only persons ill educated that commit crimes against which the laws are enforced; education therefore is good for something.

The education of both sexes is still barbarous, because it is no part of the plan of the legislators. How many laws would be rendered quite useless, were there good ones made on this head!

The Roman laws gave fathers an unlimited authority over their children: according to these principles it was natural to devolve upon them the care of their education. The laws of the Persians and Macedonians, which limited the paternal authority, charged the state with the education of youth, and provided very wise regulations for that purpose. Our laws speak like the Persians, and let people act like the Romans.

We establish universities, erect professorships, found publick schools, and we leave to pedants the whole legislation of all these useful foundations.

The great defects in education, is our too great application to form the bodies of

of one sex, and to cultivate the memory of the other.

Good laws concerning education would perhaps be less difficult to make, than to execute by the difficulty the legislator would lie under from the scarcity of good heads, who would chuse to dedicate themselves to form good hearts.

Princes are generally so badly educated, and it is so rare for a person of a bad education to be sensible of his own defects, that it is not surprizing it never comes into their heads to lay plans of education,

CXXX.

Clearing uncultivated lands is conquering rich provinces.

CXXXI.

The project of uniting the Protestant churches is thought a desperate project, but we are mistaken: it has miscarried only because it has been attempted by persons that could not bring it into reputation, and because it could not succeed without reputation: now that the philosophical spirit has gained even the divines, the success would be

be infallible, if princes engaged the ecclesiasticks to preach to the people a salutary indifference for systems and an ardent zeal for morality.

What perpetuates schism amongst protestants is, that their divines chuse rather to make proselytes for themselves, than give disciples to Christ.

What have I to do with those furious and frivolous disputes of divines about ordinances, I, who am permitted by them all to believe that my God is my father?

The disputes of divines are too warm not to be dangerous, and too lasting not to be frivolous.

Religion was given men to unite them; and it is religion alone that creates the differences which divide the minds and for ever disunite the hearts.

The clergy are paid to inspire sentiments of peace and union: they therefore rob mankind when they divide it by opinions.

Wo to that country whose clergy glory in their zeal; what I call the zeal for religion, is the direct opposite to the love of religion. Have you a mind to respect

spect religion; don't frequent those that preach it.

CXXXII.

The project that Mr. de Machault laid, of exacting from the clergy the payment of publick offices, has one specious side: a good patriot sees with pleasure, that a body which enjoys the third part of the riches of the kingdom, shall for the future be obliged to support one third of the taxes: but an equally good and more penetrating patriot sees with some anxiety, that if the clergy are once divested of their privileges, the cities wont long preserve theirs; that the countries where the states meet will not long enjoy those assemblies which constitute their riches, their strength, and preserve them from the tyranny of farmers general; that the people won't be disburthen'd, and that consequently the immense sums levied upon the clergy, will be so much deducted from the general circulation; and that the king becoming richer, the subject will of necessity become poorer, without considering that the prince will be more disposed

disposed to enter into projects of aggrandizing himself; and less difficult upon treaties of subsidy, treaties, whose expediency is not yet clearly decided.

It is surprizing, that in all the writings that have appeared on the affair of the clergy, not one of them have view'd it in that light.

CXXXIII.

There could not be a proof better adapted to simple capacities of the truth of a religion, than the choice that four children should have made of it, of the same age, and of the same temper, whom a philosopher, perfectly incredulous and indifferent, should at the same time instruct in the same method of reasoning, and explain the principles of the Mahometan, of the Jewish, of the Catholic and of the Protestant religion.

CXXXIV.

The reputation of princes does not depend on the opinion of courtiers. It is the love of the people that begins it, the voice
of

of arts that spreads it, and the consent of posterity that compleatly establishes it.

CXXXV.

Have you a mind to be respected? Do you desire to rise to the first employments? Do you aim at passing for a man of capacity? Give your self out for a man that deserves to be respected, assume the confidence of a man that's worthy of the first employments, put on the appearance of a man of talents. Assurance raises the great, modesty alone supports them.

CXXXVI.

A foreign minister insinuated to the king of Prussia, that he ought not to follow the councils of a certain power: 'the coun-
'cils, reply'd the king; tell your master
'that the only counsellor of the king of
'Prussia is the elector of Brandenburg.'
It is not surprizing that a prince who speaks in this tone has neither court nor council: too great, to stand in need of a vain pomp, too wise, to have recourse to another's wisdom.

dom. This king belongs to all nations and to all ages.

CXXXVII.

The Marquis of Langallerie form'd a prospect more becoming a great soul than a wise head ; 'twas to collect in the islands of the Archipelago all the Jews dispersed over the face of the whole earth : he would have waged war against the Pope and the house of Austria : he would have deliver'd up Christendom to the Turk ; and a hundred other like follies. See his memoirs. If he confined his views in making himself king of Cyprus, under the protection of the grand signior, there could be nothing objected to this project, but its being repugnant to scripture ; and the marquis of Langallerie might possibly lie under the misfortune of not believing it.

CXXXVIII.

The Romans, whose wisdom is so much vaunted, had a very singular maxim : all that the people want, said they, is only bread and publick games ; and in consequence of this, they distributed corn gratis

to all the poor, and treated them with magnificent shows: but what was the consequence of all this? the number of poor encreas'd every day, and the lands lay waste.

CXXXIX.

The Count de Sinzendorf has shewn all Europe, that in the most enlightened age, perseverance supported by enthusiasm and devotion, could recall that zeal, that *Mis-
ticity*, those extraordinary follies, which one would think proper only for the barbarous and dark ages. He wanted sublime virtues; he therefore set in motion the great spring of religion: he wanted men without ambition; he has introduced the community of effects: he had occasion for weak imaginations; he enfeebled them by abstinence and frugality: he must have miracles; he had the boldness to attempt some: Prophecies; he ventured them: Scholars; he corrupted some: Women; he seduced some. The best schem'd particular of his life, is the transporting his Disciples into the new world: he was very sensible that

H Pietists

Pietists were not made for the old. One ought to pardon a man's feeding himself with this beautiful conceit ; ‘ *I am the legislator and the sovereign of a nation of brothers.*

. CXL.

The late curé of St. Sulpice was the most proper man in the world to govern the finances of a great kingdom: the spirit of detail he was master of in the supreme degree; and as for the spirit of disinterestedness, he was not inferior even to the Apostles. By what he did in miniature, let us judge what he would have performed in a more elevated sphere: one cannot help regretting that so many eminent qualities were confined to the government of a parish, whilst so many pitiful creatures are at the same time in the highest offices of the state. What success has he not met with by the way of persuasion only! and what prodigies might we not expect from his vigilance, had it been armed with authority? His œconomical foundations were at once conducive to morals and to trade, in giving alms,

alms, he gave employment, and restored to virtue such as he rescued from idleness. He laboured equally for this world and for the next: the charitable actions of a pious ecclesiastick had been the highest performances of the statesman. Had he been comptroller of the finances, he would have disburdened the people, employed the poor, enriched the mechanick, embellished the capital, doubled the number of hands by making labour more simple, delivered the provinces from those armies of officers that ruin them: under his administration idleness would be looked upon as treason against the state: and all France would have been as happy as his parish.

CXLI.

It is impossible there should be good heads in a country where it is not permitted to have elevated souls.

CXLII.

Every one, who inquires into the salary of an honourable employment before he accepts it, will fill it only as banker.

CXLIII.

This is what is call'd an expedient in the language of the finances. Under Augustus, the governour of Gaul imagin'd a project of dividing the year into fourteen months instead of twelve, and that, because the Gauls pay'd the state a certain tribute every month, it is needless to observe that this governor was a freedman.

CXLIV.

The best calculator is always the best legislator: what a genius must one have to discover all the different sides of the various objects, that he is obliged to take in at one time! how many calculations are there not requisite for the number of the subjects, the price of labour, the resources, the genius of the people, the possible degrees of credit, how all these particulars are connected with each other, and the result of all their relations in general.

The husbandman must always be the principal object of calculations; he is the foundation upon which the vast machine of the

the state must rest, because of twenty portions of inhabitants the husbandmen make sixteen.

It is absolutely impossible, that a prince, however wise he is, can introduce such laws as will make all his subjects happy: he must therefore calculate as near as he can, the sum total of the wretched relatively to the greatest possible number of the happy.

Civil society can't subsist without crimes, nor without misfortunes: they are the salts that prevent its corruption. But the legislator ought to apply himself to the softening these misfortunes, and to the enfeebling the dominion of vice; we aggravate misfortunes by injustice; we propagate vice by impunity: but favour makes it both brilliant and contagious.

CXLV.

There is no inconveniency in a state's being indebted to itself, it is only the left hand's owing and paying the right. But the debt must be sure, and the payment must be exact, otherwise the right hand will be withered.

CXLVI.

We permit and authorise a great number of those little establishments, which secure to widows and children annuities, and other advantages that ought to be the fruit of industry; and it remains still unproved, that such establishments are as useful to the state, as they appear to be to some private persons. We should once for all, examine whether they don't suppress industry, whether they are not productive of that indifference which is so mortal to trade, whether they don't favour the spirit of idleness.

Calculations discover many truths: but they don't discover the use that should be made of them: the statesman must judge of the advantages to be made of what he learns from the Arithmetician.

In the remonstrances of the 21st of May, the Parliament of Paris has detailed with a great deal of strength and good sense the inconveniencies of annuities. ' Those, say
' they, who suffer themselves to be seduced
' by the desire of living in a more easy
' and

‘ and affluent manner, are eager to acquire
 ‘ these annuities. Some who might give
 ‘ subjects to the state, lay themselves under
 ‘ an absolute impossibility of settling in the
 ‘ world, having no solid effects to be-
 ‘ queath their posterity. Others stifle in
 ‘ their hearts the tenderness which they owe
 ‘ to their children, sacrifice their stock to
 ‘ increase their income, and ruin their fa-
 ‘ milies and their heirs. To offer subjects
 riches that vanish with their possessors, is
 nothing else in fact but inviting them in
 some measure to renounce all the sentiments
 of nature, and shewing a desire that every
 thing should perish with them. It must
 add great weight to a cause, to have the
 parliament of Paris on ones side.

CXLVII.

An Englishman pretends, that, after all
 deductions are made, England pays Nor-
 way a hundred and thirty thousand guineas.
 It would be an easier matter for Norway
 to encrease this annual tribute than for Eng-
 land to diminish it.

CXLVIII.

Trade converts the iron mines of Norway into silver ones: and the fine manufacture going to be establish'd there will transform them into gold ones.

Spain has only two methods of recovering from that extreme poverty into which her excessive riches having thrown her; the one is to abandon the over-abundant mines of Perou, and reassume the tillage of their lands; the other to sell in Europe the gold wrought and manufactur'd which she receives in ore from the mines of America.

It is neither gold nor silver that constitutes the riches of a nation, 'tis industry.

CXLIX.

If there was in Europe a prince who, to invite into his dominions rich foreigners, would settle on them a pension proportional to the income of the sum they were to carry with them, this prince would not attract many rich persons into his dominions, because among the rich, one part prefers good company to every thing, another

no other the resources of commerce that has enrich'd them, and that there can be neither good company nor commerce in a country where politicks and poverty inspir'd such wretched expedients.

CL.

Such a person passes for a bad minister against whom no other objection lies than that of not having learned the science of not being virtuous.

As it is an easy matter to rise when one is not very delicate in the choice of the means, so it is not difficult to perform the greatest things with the assistance of intrigues and villany.

CLI.

Nothing inspires a greater veneration for a prince, than his courtiers saying that he is covetous, and his people's not saying so.

CLII.

Princes don't know their subjects enough: Lewis the XIVth would not have refused prince Eugene a company of horse, had he known him.

Subjects don't know their prince enough: the French would not have accused Lewis the XIIth of avarice if they had known that he wept in council as often as the necessity of the times requir'd the imposition of the lightest Tax. His courtiers gave him that character in publick, because he did not impoverish his people to enrich them. Nothing corrects a Frenchman so much as shame and the fear of ridicule: they therefore thought proper, in order to correct their master, to have him exposed on the theatre of the capital. All Paris went to ridicule a quality which occasioned their happiness. ' I am better pleased, said Lewis the XIIth, that my avarice makes my subjects laugh than if it made them cry.'

This prince knew very well, that the king who is most covetous to his courtiers is always the most generous to his people.

CLIII.

The Baron de Barr is of opinion, that the only means of making all nations happy,

py, would be establishing every where the English government: and there is actually nothing would make them more miserable. The English government is only good for English heads. To reduce men to an uniform constitution, we must reduce their genius and character to uniformity. There are countries formed for liberty; there are others made for slavery, and it would be as surprizing that the empire of Persia should relish a free government, as it would be for the republick of Sweden to submit again to the yolk of slavery.

CLIV.

If the president de Montesquieu had written in England, his book would have been more true, and consequently less entertaining.

CLV.

You have two hundred thousand poor: don't send them to foreigners, but make foreigners maintain them. Employ them in manufactures whose produce you will export to the neighbouring states. These

poor who are now burdensome will become your richest revenue.

CLVI.

Lay heavy duties on the importation of foreign commodities, and free the exportation of your own from every incumbrance; this is a maxim approv'd in every country, and practis'd only in England.

CLVII.

There are states so unhappily situated, that the grandeur, that the existence of their sovereigns is, I may say, precarious: there must be ages of continual success to make them flourish: there needs only the loss of one battle to overturn them. The moment the king falls asleep the throne tumbles.

CLVIII.

Would it be advantageous for Denmark to make Copenhagen a free port? no; and my chief reason is, that they have not made it so, nor are they going about to make it one.

CLIX.

Why are virtuous women always less witty than such as are not so?

CLX.

Projector! never be disheartened. A person has promised the commerce of all the world to a people, who have neither ports, nor money, nor ships, nor commodities, nor men: it was a sensible people, and the man was believed.

CLXI.

Euphemon is intrusted with one of the most important employments of the state; Euphemon is capable of it, and I am very glad he is: but Euphemon is the most capable of it, and it is that which galls me.

CLXII.

Men have no taste for arts in those countries where the women have no taste for dress.

The agreeable arts are not cultivated with any success, but in countries where the fair sex have graces.

CLXIII.

CLXIII.

A nation often boasts of what is prejudicial to it. The Swede glories in his Marine, because the sailors serve their apprenticeship in Holland and in England, that is to say, because Sweden has not trade enough to employ, to form, and to keep them at home.

CLXIV.

The agreeable arts are for the southern, and the useful arts are for the northern climates. It is not because there is not fire enough in the north, or phlegm enough in the south, to cultivate the former in the one, and to perfect the latter in the other; but this fire, and this phlegm can't be supported without continual encouragement: arts are naturaliz'd in a country only by care and by liberality; the florist must incessantly correct the badness of the soil; and the florist grows tired or negligent.

CLXV.

Riccoboni has given an account of all the stages of Europe, excepting the Danish

nish, which he has taken no notice of: to what can this omission be attributed? Is it ignorance? It deserves being known: is it contempt? If it were known, it could not be condemned. I shall supply this deficiency.

The Danish comedy owes its birth and progress to the Baron Holberg: this learned and ingenious gentleman has drawn from his fruitful vein seven or eight volumes of dramatic performances: his manner is exact, dry, natural, at least if one can judge by the German translation: every where as correct as Terence, and sometimes as pleasant as Plautus: the reading of the modern French comic writers has not spoil'd him: no insipid dialogues, no metaphysical scenes, no over exquisite and fine spun sentiments. It is easier for a foreigner to say what he is not, than to guess what he is. Among his countrymen such as are delicate and nice judges object to him his low jests, and a profusion of that gross humour proper only to please the taste of the mob; they say that Mr. Holberg has not the language of the polite world, that he
makes

makes choice only of the low and trivial in manners, that he should have made more brilliant foibles the objects of his humours, that he might have found in high life persons, characters and follies more interesting: in a word, they compare him to those painters who copy nature exactly, but who never studied nature in her beauties. But these censures are too severe; because the professor Holberg deserves some indulgence, for his being not only the father of the stage, but besides that he has no successor; not to mention that he is the first professor of a college who has obliged the world with valuable comedies.

Melampus, the honest Ambition, the Whimsical Lady, Henry and Perine are not farces: we translate every day English plays that are much inferior to them: this author had without doubt excelled in polite comedy, if the pit had permitted him to follow his own taste; it was this pit that extorted from him the *political Pewterer, Plutus* and *Ulysses*.

The stage might easily be perfected: one ought first to proscribe all the French farces
which

which painful Translators turn into Danish, at ten crowns a piece: there is in every country more than wit enough to compose good farces: what occasion therefore is there for translating any? One ought to be exceeding delicate in the choice of translations: in this kind their list of plays should offer only what are wrought in the highest perfection: good œconomy requires that in matters of pleasure nothing should be borrowed from foreigners, but what is excellent and exquisitely finished. A stage should translate only to form itself; it should therefore copy only great models: the *Miser*, the *Misanthrope*, the *Gamester*, the *Boaster* will perfect the taste of authors and that of the pit. The *mock Doctor*, the *Festin de Piere* and *Nanine* are enough to vitiate both the one and the other.

To have good original pieces, it is necessary to encourage the authors, and to encourage them, we must solicit them with the temptation of gain: the stage should be the patrimony of men of parts and wit, and every performance paid according to the number of the representations. If authors.

thors consulted their interest, they would not print their pieces, 'till after the first fire of the publick curiosity was somewhat abated. The custom observed in Denmark of printing the piece at the same time with the play-bill, irritates the spirit of criticism, and blunts the edge of our curiosity. The self-love of the poet cannot pay too great a regard to the delicacy of the spectator.

The Danish stage will be imperfect as long as there will be no tragedies performed there; it will be, if I may be allowed the expression, a limping stage. The Danes have only some few scenes of the Cid translated by Mr. Rostgaard, the best of their poets. Some persons charge their language for not being proper for tragedy: but is it credible that a tongue, whose tone is so plaintive and so moving, should not be proper to convey the pathetick and express sentiments? Others pretend that the character of the nation is repugnant to it: but is it conceivable, that a haughty, noble and generous nation can't produce authors that can treat of the most highly interesting subjects, that are acquainted with the human heart,

heart, and are capable of moving the passions? If the Danes have no tragedies, 'tis neither the fault of their language nor their want of genius: but is purely to be ascribed to circumstances: their stage is but in its infancy! and the language of the poets among them is not yet become the language of the Gods. Be this as it will, they never will have excellent Comedies, till they have, at least, bad tragedies.

I forgot to observe, that their comedies are all in prose. At Paris, it is found infinitely difficult to keep up the spirit of the piece in prose for five acts: at Copenhagen they judge it infinitely more so to keep it up in verse, without reckoning that the mechanism of poetry seems there ridiculous in the mouths of people who should speak naturally, simply, and without any preparation.

The actors are as good as the pieces they perform. As the profession of a comedian in Denmark is neither stigmatised by the laws, nor by religion, nor by the customs of the country, this occupation is exercised by young persons, who for the most part have had a liberal education, who have natural and improved understandings.

In

In France players are despised by the people and careſſed by the nobility: in Denmark they are not, 'tis true, careſſed by the men of quality, but neither are they deſpised by the commonalty. It were to be wiſh'd for the perfection of the ſtage, that they ſhould be admitted into the beſt company; they would ſoon catch their manner, and amuſe the publick by copying them. Their Harlequin is tolerable: a tour to Paris would quite form him. Their ſop is ſuch as ſuits a country where no ſuch character is found in perfection.

As to the actreſſes, they are leſs handſome than pretty, more pretty than agreeable, more agreeable than good. The publick is divided between Mademoiſelle Shilo and Mademoiſelle Materne: the one is more applauded, the other is better loved. Paris wou'd look upon the firſt as a very delicate morſel.

Some people complain that the actors want taſte in their dreſs: this reproach falls with more juſtice upon the actreſſes. Yes, I muſt declare my ſentiments, even at the riſk of lying under the imputation
of

of rudeness; their ornaments are without elegance, and their dress without imagination. The stage that should give the tone to fashions receives them from the court, the court borrows them from the city, the city has them from Hamburgh, which imports them from Paris, from Berlin, from Dresden and from Hanover, and spoils them all by mixing with them that clumsy spirit which the heavy air of trade throws upon every thing.

Methinks the directors are not attentive enough to procure new subjects: they never have the first appearance of an actress, or setting out of a new actor; this is however the only means of putting the stage upon a solid footing, and of keeping continually alive the curiosity of the publick.

The salaries of the actors are not very considerable, nor are those of the actresses proportionable either to their talents or to their conduct.

The room of the playhouse is built with judgment, the seats distributed with œconomy, the machines compos'd with great expence and simplicity: the stage is almost

as

as large as the pit ; which is a sensible defect. They say that the musick of the Orchestra is very good ; it may be so, but the interludes are so long, that it has always considerably tired me.

This company has it's directors : would it not be better that they directed themselves, and that they had, as in France, the gentlemen of the bed chamber for their superiors?

Nothing of what tends to the perfection of publick spectacles and sciences can be indifferent to the publick good ; and I should be glad that Denmark, which distinguishes itself in so many particulars, would distinguish itself in every thing.

There is at Copenhagen a company of French comedians ; they have a pension from the king. It would be an easy matter to take proper measures to put them in a condition to represent all the good pieces, and to represent them with success.

CLXVI.

People are impolite because they don't know the world ; and people are too polite for the same reason.

The most fatiguing unpoliteness, is that which proceeds from an excess of politeness.

The most agreeable, the most engaging, and the most graceful address is nothing but mere formality, when the heart is not polite.

CLXVII.

It is by the same dexterity, that Courtiers and Belles employ without wearing out, the one their credit, and the other their beauty. There is in politics a sort of coquetry.

CLXVIII.

A people is sometimes governed only at the fourth hand ; 'tis phantom upon phantom.

' I look upon it, said Montaigne, as a
' great happiness for princes, that the publick
' don't know how these great men are
' led by their valets, who are in their turn
' prompted by the chamber maids.

CLXIX.

CLXIX.

‘ I don’t like things going on in so uniform a manner : that does not suit my
‘ romantick turn : I am for events : fortunate or unfortunate, sorrowful or agreeable, I must have them. I go to bed
‘ satisfied, provided I am so with the
‘ Gazette.

The Englishman who talked to me in this manner, was ten years upon his travels to see men, and yet had seen nothing but facts.

CLXX.

A certain person once told me, that all his children had a lively imagination and sentiment ; because, said he, I beget them only in these rapid moments, when I am all wit, all heart, and my wife is in the same tune.

CLXXI.

All the application of the politician, of the coquette, of the warrior, of the man of the world, and of the mechanick should be confin’d to the study of the moment.

CLXXII.

CLXXII.

A man of merit, is a great gainer by belonging to a nation that has none.

CLXXIII.

It is natural for a man, even for an Englishman to have a certain serenity settled in his eyes, when there is no further doubt about the fine shape of his leg.

CLXXIV.

One may love society, and yet pass the summer in a country, where one can't have company even in winter : there are certain indolent souls which insensibly fall into a kind of passive state, and which suffer less in growing tired of a place where they have been so before, than in going in search of pleasure elsewhere.

CLXXV.

A country may have a good constitution and a bad government ; & vice versa.

When the government makes a handle of the very constitution to oppress the subjects, that people cannot possibly be in a worse situation.

I

When

When the constitution has defects to which the government gives the force of laws, there is but one step to be made from being to non-existence.

When the constitution is so solidly establish'd, that it has prevented all abuses and turn'd them even to its advantage, the government may then suspend the playing off the springs, but never destroy the springs themselves : by what this people have been, one may always judge of what they will be. Tho' the government may hastily grasp at a favourable moment to raise itself, and change the face of things, that alteration will be only accidental: the constitution will always soon regain the ascendant; that cannot deceive us.

The situation, I won't say the most flourishing, but the most happy that a people can possibly be in, is when a bad constitution makes every day new advances towards a good one, under the direction of a wise government.

A good or bad constitution is the work only of the climate; but a solid and steady constitution is the work of the climate, of
 revolu-

revolutions, of years, of chance, of prudence, of crimes, and of virtues all together.

England is a very striking instance that an unshaken and steady constitution, is a happiness that cannot be too dearly purchased.

An act of parliament that should strike at the liberty of the press, would give the constitution a greater blow, than an act which should permit the government an augmentation of six thousand men in the army.

The constitution of England is immortal, because a wise people can't be enslaved by an enemy at home, nor a free people by an enemy abroad.

Rome perish'd; and was it possible for her to subsist? Her system tended to aggrandizing herself; it did not tend to her preservation. England is arrived to such a pass, as to be impossible for her to perish, because revolutions which should have been the bane of her system, have served only to compleat it.

It is very difficult to pronounce upon the constitution of a people, when this constitution is not a state of violence.

'Tis said that the constitution of Poland is defective: this assertion supposes that a people are in the wrong to be satisfied with their own laws.

The right of electing their kings atones for many inconveniencies. The value of this right is well understood only by those that enjoy it. Perhaps no other constitution would do for Poland.

The *Veto* is not its greatest fault: I find another more essential; that is the vassalage of the peasant. The rest of men are too little in a state where there have been some great enough to say as they were playing at Pharo, 'ten thousand men upon this ace.'

It would be at present a very interesting spectacle, to see a philosopher, a Montesquieu, for instance, legislator of a people as uniform'd as that of Poland.

CLXXVI.

Friendship never ends at court but when hatred is openly declared. In the world, people invent discontents to make way for treachery; and at court to palliate them.

CLXXVII.

If the liberty of the press was greater at Paris, that capital would carry on a trade in books, that would improve Europe and enrich France. It is a melancholy reflexion for a Frenchman to see Holland growing rich by the wit of France, which is of no advantage to the French themselves.

A very good book may have a very bad effect, witness Cervantes's Don Quixote.

Cervantes has quite extinguished in Spain the brilliant ideas of knight errantry; and since that time Spain has declined every day. It is dangerous to cure a people of their whims, and of their follies, when these whims and follies constitute the very essence of their character, and that this character is good in the main. There are some

follies that are better than a certain kind of wisdom.

CLXXVIII.

I had rather have been the author of the history of the Troglodites, which does not consist of above twenty pages, than of the fine, of the admirable, of the immortal history of the president de Thou, in six volumes in folio.

CLXXIX.

It would be at present easy for a prince to gain in two years twenty thousand subjects. The means is infallible, simple and easy : but I would not discover it for the empire of Russia. However, that I may not pass for a projector, I will add that it is no new scheme.

CLXXX.

There is established at Copenhagen a foundation which deserves to be imitated in every capital. As the love of honour survives the loss of it; remorse, which is the last gasp of dying virtue, sometimes
took

took too cruel a vengeance for forfeited innocence : and a guilty mother was tempted to sacrifice her innocent offspring to human considerations. The king therefore prevented these disorders by a regulation, which that provident humanity which directs all his laws, inspired him with. A criminal shame destroys no more the fruit of pleasure ; an imprudent virgin may lose her innocence, without the state's losing a citizen. A private retreat under the dark veil of the night, opens its doors to timorous weakness ; the certainty of an impenetrable secrecy guide her trembling steps : the little citizen is born as mysteriously as he was begotten : by the little creature's innocent smile, he seems to thank love for giving him a being, and humanity for having preserv'd it to him : a poet would, on this occasion, describe the genius of Denmark standing by and applauding that act of benevolence, clapping his wings, and wiping away the tears of the little innocent that he adopts.

CLXXXI.

How comes it to pass that a man who is agreeable in private is oftentimes ridiculous in publick?

CLXXXII.

Don't be surpris'd, that the clerk makes you wait longer in his antichamber than the minister of state; pride fills up the vacuity.

CLXXXIII.

The English Spectator says he is sorry he can't assign a reason why ladies are always talking when they know nothing. And that is precisely the reason, because they do know nothing.

CLXXXIV.

To be virtuous, 'tis not sufficient to desire it.

CLXXXV.

It is proper there should be at court publick days, pleasures, and spectacles: they proclaim

proclaim abundance, and procure it at the same time.

CLXXXVI.

The character of nations is invariable. The modern Germans resemble in every feature the Germans of Tacitus; Claudian with one stroke of his pencil has delineated antient and modern Spain.

— Frugum

*Illa ferax, & egena, licet pretiosa metalis
Principibus foecunda piis.*

The French were formerly under the Cæsars, what they are now under the Bourbons: this is a decisive proof of it. A Gaul to be admitted to the Emperor's table, made the officer who was charg'd with the care of inviting the guests a present of two hundred thousand sesterces; the next day as the prince was exposing some things to sale, he had some trifle adjudg'd to the Gaul at the rate of two hundred thousand sesterces, and said to him at the same time, 'you must come to supper with the emperor, and that by his own invitation.'

CLXXXVII.

Meanness is oftentimes the principle of greatness. One makes a fortune because he can cringe, another because he can lye; this man because he seasonably dishonours himself; that because he betrays his friend: but the surest means to mount as high as Alberoni, is to offer, like him, ragouts of mushrooms to the Duke of Vendome; and there are Vendomes every where.

CLXXXVIII.

Colbert destroys Fouquet, Alberoni the princefs of Urins, Madam de Maintenon the Marchionefs of Montespan, Chauvelin the Cardinal de Fleuri; and you are surpriz'd that men in place do ill offices to men of talents.

CLXXXIX.

The great have no other ascendant over us but what our meanness gives them, or that our weakness permits them.

CXC.

A manufactory, whose establishment would cost the king 5000 crowns, and which would annually be worth 10000 crowns to the state, should not be exposed to fall through a failure of 5000.

There are some countries where the failure of a manufacturer hurts only a private person, and there are others where the failure of a manufacturer for ever affects the state. These are differences that should be made and yet which are not made.

The manufactory of Abbeville was on the point of failing: Colbert is informed of this news, and supports it with a remittance of a hundred thousand crowns. A glorious example, but useless to be quoted, because it can make an impression only on Colberts, and the Colberts have no occasion for examples.

CXCI.

There may be honour in a country where lackeys meet with preferment; but there

is neither honour, nor principle, nor shadow of honour in any country where the having wore a livery is a recommendation to preferment.

It is very deplorable, that the order of lackeys have made such advances in Europe; how glorious would it be for a minister of state to humble the pride of footmen, who are become almost as exorbitant in their pretensions as the Merchants?

Let lackeys obtain employments in the finances: it is fit that such offices should be executed by persons marked with the publick hatred and contempt. Let them occupy the employments of the Custom-house, it is often very expedient that the king should be defrauded of his right: but at least let them be excluded from offices that require nobleness of sentiment, and integrity of conduct. Never confer honours upon persons that have no honour.

You may perhaps find sentiments of integrity in a person that has been a lackey: but don't expect to find noble sentiments: if he pretends to any, shun him, he is a villain, or at least the vilest of all wretches.

CXCII.

In order to rise to the highest degree of preferment, 'tis common to forget and to outdo one's self, to sacrifice our very passions to virtue, and to the publick good: have we gain'd our point, we devolve back to our nature, we neglect our duties, we refer every thing to ourselves. As soon as we are firmly settled in a post, we indemnify and reimburse ourselves for all the disinterestedness, the liberty, the pleasures, the humours, the resentment that we have for-gone in our pursuits after it.

CXCIII.

A minister may now be far superior to Ximenes, to Richelieu, to Colbert, in the science of politicks, and, at the same time, be far inferior to them in the genius of politicks.

Spirits of the first order diffuse around so clear a brightness, that they raise spirits of the lowest class to their own level.

CXCIV.

The superior genius has but his own voice in council, but he has his own penetration,

netration, which makes him master of all the other votes.

CXCV:

The greatest part of princes take fruitless pains for no other reason, but because they don't give the machine of the government a motion uninterrupted, durable and independent of themselves.

CXCVI.

An indolent king abandons the care both of the current business and the extraordinary. A king of a shallow genius amuses himself in acting the minister or the clerk, when he should have been acting the sovereign.

CXCVII.

The highest master-piece of a prime minister would be the abolishing before his death the title and the power of that office by abolishing the necessity of it, and by supplying the defect, by sage regulations for the service of weak, indolent and drooping princes.

CXCVIII.

CXCVIII.

The establishing a plurality of councils was an enterprize worthy of the late regent the Duke of Orleans. It is a pity that it has not subsisted: this prince had too much fire; he sowed with ardour: but had not patience to expect the harvest.

The establishing a plurality of councils, such as it had been projected by the Abbé de Saint Pierre, could not be introduced without a great deal of difficulty, because it was too contrary to prejudices, too salutary to the state, too useful to the nobility: but when once established, it would become every day more and more perfect, and would at length be immutable: it was the most noble, the most natural, and the most infallible means of enfeebling for ever the royal authority. It was impossible to lay a more cunning snare for Despotism.

CXCIX.

The state is ruin'd when what was call'd duty, usurps the name of virtue.

The love of one's country is extinguish'd
the

the moment it commences to become an object of praise.

CC.

There are in every country certain fix'd degrees of rank in the army : and there are none any where for the ministry : is it then easier to be a prime minister than to be a general ? Does not the government of a state require more expence and knowledge than the command of an army ?

CCI.

When geniuses are daily springing up, 'tis impossible that the reputation of the age should decline.

Europe will perhaps see ages of bad taste, but will never see ages of barbarity: the invention of printing has taken care of that.

CCII.

I can't tell whether it be a particular humour of mine ; but no body ever appears great to me who makes me think that I am little.

CCIII.

CCIII.

Of two heroes, he who esteems his rival most is generally the greatest.

I love to hear Condé say in a difficult moment : what would not I give to have only a conference of two hours with the soul of Monfr. de Turenne ?

CCIV.

The government of Berne is democratical de jure, and aristocratical de facto. Some day or other there will start up in this republick some scheming person, who will unite in his person all the sovereign power, by delivering the country of Vaud from the tyranny of the bailiffs, by humbling the six reigning families, by associating to the first employments what they call at Berne the lower Burgeoise, by pillaging that immense treasure which is the fruits of the thrift of many ages.

The forces of the Canton of Berne united under a skilful commander are able to make head against all the other Cantons. All the Cantons are therefore interested to make this republick enter into its primitive

primitive constitution, as the most proper means to preserve them from the enterprises of ambition.

Switzerland has nothing to fear but from Berne: but Berne has every thing to fear from its aristocracy.

France, Austria, and Savoy, it is said, are interested to maintain the liberty of this united republick: that's very true; but Europe may happen to be in a thousand such circumstances as by occupying entirely these powers, will give the Swiss the opportunity of loosing their liberty in the same manner that they first acquired it.

CCV.

Isabella of Castile was very early sensible of the great importance it is to princes not to have their characters discovered: she would by no means indulge herself in the slightest mark of weakness; she would not pass for a courageous woman: she would have chose that people forgot that she was a woman at all. Tho' of a tender and amorous constitution, she preserved in the arms of Ferdinand, and (to speak in the

the language of Montaigne,) under the very nose of the conjugal rites, a disdainful gravity, a noble disinterestedness and a haughty indifference.

Tho' of a tender and delicate frame, there did not escape from her the least token of sensibility in those moments which the sharpness of the pangs she suffer'd from her frequent deliveries, made to seem whole ages. How ambitious must one be to give politicks the force of conquering nature, by resisting equally every sensation of pleasure and of pain.

CCVI.

There are perhaps more persons who have been wanting to an opportunity, than there are to whom an opportunity has been wanting.

CCVII.

Castile furnishes commanders, and Aragon kings, says the Spanish proverb, to the great credit of Castile.

CCVIII.

Courtiers are so inclined to put fine answers into the mouths of princes, that their silence about their wit is the most compleat proof of their stupidity.

The repartees of princes gain a great deal by passing through the mouths of courtiers; in publishing them they give them a certain finishing, which was wanting to them at their birth. It is not at all likely, that all the sayings attributed to Lewis the XIVth came forth at first with that fire, with those graceful charms: as they were repeated, they were imbellish'd, set off with circumstances, rounded, and perhaps somewhat spoil'd, for those contrasts, that symmetry, that scrupulous exactness even in the sudden starts and sallies of the mind, bespeak the wit rather than the monarch.

A repartee extends farther the reputation of a prince, than a magnificent palace: the curiosity of the foreigner must come in search of the palace, whereas the repartee flies in an instant through all the corners of Europe, and goes in search of him: the
palace

palace is at length destroy'd by time, but the repartee lives in history: the palace owes its beauties to the architect that laid the plan of it; and the repartee belongs only to the person that spoke it.

The words of kings, whenever it is the king that speaks, ought to be proofs of genius, of grandeur, or of wisdom, luminous touches that charm, that strike, or that persuade.

The words of a king, when it is the man that speaks, should be proofs of humanity, of good sense, of sensibility, touches that give a high opinion of the goodness of his heart, or of the sprightliness of his imagination.

We have seen some kings that were pedants, and we have seen others that were coxcombs, fops.

The pedantry of royalty consists in speaking and acting as a king, when they should have talked and acted as men; in preferring always the magnificent to the elegant, the pompous expences of a tumultuous luxury to the modest expences of a delicate taste; in a continual personating a foreign character,

rafter, and never appearing under their own ; in paying so high a regard to their own persons as to imagine themselves extremely considerable in the scale of beings ; in rigorously exacting of their courts to amuse themselves with gravity, to laugh with decorum, to copy with exactness, to be without murmuring the victims of the ceremonial, the martyrs of uniformity ; to screw themselves up painfully to the decently wearisome pitch of starch deliberations, and formal ordinances in those conversations where liberty, confidence and gaiety ought to reign, where we should be sociable companions and not deep statesmen, and where the most respected is always the least loved.

The foppery of royalty consists in treating trifles seriously and the most weighty concerns lightly ; in childishly aiming at graces, at amiable qualities, at wit, in taking the advantage of his rank to bring his whims in vogue, to give credit to oddities, to propagate singular and favourite follies, in composing his air, in studying his manner,

ner, in preparing his fallies; in preferring in his buildings the pretty to the beautiful, the gewgaw to the noble, the whimsical to the regular, in his enterprizes the brilliant to the solid, the specious to the good, the marvellous to the useful, and in his pleasures the refin'd to the delicate, the glaring to the agreeable, and the singular to the simple; in a word, in affecting to pass in his court for the model of gentility, for the hero of gallantry and for the God of the fashions.

If I was a king!—If you were a king, you would govern the state as badly as you do your family. ‘There is not one among us, says Montaigne, who would not be worse than kings, if we were continually corrupted as they are by a parcel of rascally flatterers:’ If Alexander, that great king and philosopher, could not guard himself against them, how shall I have constancy, judgment and liberty enough to resist their attacks? for that would be a place without a name: and without this, it would lose both its graces and its effects.

CCX.

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CCX.

The first reflexion conducts men to pleasure; it is the second reflection that conducts women to it: ask it of such as are ingenuous.

CCXI.

There are men whose value is above all estimation: they are those that give wise laws to an ill govern'd state, and who set a state already respected upon a more respectful fooling. These men are not very rare, but they are rarely employed.

CCXII.

Learn to discern characters; such a person is proper for intriguing who is not so for negotiation; the cardinal Dubois, for instance.

CCXIII.

Demophilus is thought capable of nothing: put him in his proper place; and he will be capable of every thing.

CCXIV.

CCXIV.

As the king can't see every thing, nor always transact affairs in person, he ought to be a perfect judge of men; and as he has not time sufficient to examine people to the bottom, he ought to be thoroughly skill'd in physiognomy.

In general, men that have no character have no physiognomy.

CCXV.

It is circumstances that open mens characters: and it belongs to the prince to judge what sort of persons he throws in the way of circumstances, in order to be opened.

Th' occasion oft calls latent worth to light,
For he creates, who places talents right.

CCXVI.

William the third, being very much puzzled at a state affair, answered those that advised him to consult Newton. ' Newton! but Newton is only a great philosopher.' M. Ducloux applauds this answer, in his consideration upon manners. However, it would be very surprizing, that so great a philosopher were not a great politician;

it would be very astonishing, that Newton should not be able to carry this geometrical genius into a state affair, all whose different parts were shew'd him. Newton perhaps could not have decided between a picture of Vandyk's, and a performance of Poussin's, because the taste of sciences and the taste of arts is different: but he must have had an understanding very unpliant if he could not decide between an opinion of king William's and an opinion of Mareschal de Scomberg's, because the genius of the philosopher and the genius of the politician is the same.

CCXVII.

A foreigner, arriving at Paris, was very much surpriz'd to learn that Corneille was not prime minister. This foreigner in all appearance imagin'd that there were affairs worthy of the great Corneille treated in the council of Lewis the great: this ambitious, daring and sublime genius would not have perhaps found two single instances of business that rose to his level during the course of the longest ministry: he would have

have always given a wrong opinion, because he would have always thought as a great man : he would have shined amongst the Romans, at the head of the senate, where he might determine the lot of nations and regulate the fate of kings ; he would have been ridiculous in the council of France, where he would have always overshot the truth, except he communicated to the minutest objects the grandeur of his genius, according to his own motto ;

Et mihi res, non me rebus submittere conor.
Great affairs require genius and integrity : Corneille had too much of both for little ones.

Those that observe in Corneille only the great poet, and who don't see in him the great politician, should be sent to the Marchal de Grammont, who alledg'd that his works should be the breviary of kings ; to Mr. de Louvois, who said, that to pass a right judgment on the tragedy of Otho, there should be a pit compos'd of ministers of state ; to Mr. de Turrene, who upon hearing the beautiful scene between Sertorius and Pompey, cried out, several times :

“ Where has Corneille pick’d up all his knowledge ?”

It would be very strange, that he who made Photinus, Achilles, Maximian and Cinna talk so much to the purpose, should not be capable of deliberating upon a business proposed to him, and that a person who laid the plan of the tragedy of Heraclius should not be capable of drawing up the plan of a political memorial.

Tacitus and Corneille are the two authors that have seen farthest into the depths of the human heart : there is not perhaps one maxim of politicks that has escaped them ; they have open’d, they have penetrated, they have divined every thing. Two of their pages contain more than all the political testaments of la Hogue, of Richelieu, of Mazarin, of Colbert, and of Louvois.

CCXVIII.

Such a person would be capable of ruling an empire for the same reason that makes him incapable of ruling his family.

How

How should a man, such as the Abbé Saint Pierre, whose taste led him to be employ'd about the most interesting objects, be able to descend to the minute details of domestick œconomy.

CCXIX.

It is a prejudice generally receiv'd, that men of letters are good for nothing but for making books; as if those who have applied themselves most to perfect their reason, were by that means render'd incapable of employments that required the greatest exertion of reason, as if to excel in business there was only one kind of understanding requir'd, and as if the taste for arts, knowledge, and the talent of elocution were incompatible with the knowledge of politics.

It would be an easy matter to prove, that the princes, that the ministers who have governed best have been the most learned: Xenophon, Hannibal, Cæsar, Tully, Augustus, Mæcenus, Pliny, Antoninus, Marcus Aurelius, Julian, Charlemagne, L'Hopital, Richlieu, Prior, Bolingbroke, Daguesseau,

guesseau, and Ximenes, have augmented with their names the list of great men and that of authors.

Was Monsr. de Polignac the less dexterous negociator, for having been a philosopher and a poet? And for having written things that deserve to be read, has the king of Prussia been the less capable to perform things that deserve to be written.

The king of Prussia is not superior to the greatest number of other kings only by the greater advantages of his knowledge and improvements. If he was born in the simple rank of a private man, it is likely that those very talents that distinguish him from the common herd of princes, would have contributed to leave him in the obscurity of an unknown subject: if he had been of a birth that would have made him remarkable, people would have said of him: there's a young fellow who stands fair for being one day president of the Academy of Berlin; the most skilful minister would have been the farthest from guessing, that the same qualities that set him at the head of a literary society would
place

place him at the direction of councils, and at the head of armies.

The spirit of business and the spirit of learning are so far from being contradictory, that among the Greeks and the Romans the one never went without the other.

The ancients were not acquainted with the secret of being great men by halves.

At present the men in place are fond of having at least a superficial taste for arts, and having no manner of notion of those sciences that a man of condition should never be ignorant of: but let them leave the taste of arts to courtiers, and let them replace them by the taste of such sciences as make the mind less brilliant but more just, less amusing but more useful, less airy but more solid.

Let such ministers as can't join the knowledge of letters with the knowledge of business, impute this to the narrowness of their understanding.

Read Seneca, and you will see a peevish philosopher, an excessive moralist, a wit attentive to the ornaments of his compositions, even to a degree of childishness. Read, at

the same time, the Roman history, and you will find that this man who could range periods so well, could still better regulate the fairs of the empire. It was Seneca that governed the world during the five first years of Nero's reign; and according to Trajan, few kings have equalled these first years. How wise must the reign of Seneca have been, since it merited the encomiums of a prince, the most proper to honour human nature and to represent the divine? if I may be allow'd the expression, of a great author.

CCXX.

Talents are never well protected but by talents; and it belongs only to the king of Prussia to admit into his familiarity Maupertuis, Voltaire, and Algarotti, and to say, 'that men of learning and men of genius raise themselves to the level of sovereigns.' *Memoirs Brandenburg, Part 2.*

It is very hard not to love the arts, when a person performs so many things that deserve being celebrated by them.

Carmenamatquisquis carmine digna facit.

CCXXI.

CCXXI.

What is a great commander ! a man who is admired, far inferior to a great chess-player who is not so ?

CCXXII.

What an able politician must he have been, that was the inventor of the ceremonial of courts ! To make himself only master of affairs, he engaged his prince in pompous trifles, regulated his hours, and fixed his moments. By dint of respects, of distinctions, of flattery, and attention to create domestick officers to assist him in the most natural wants, it looks as if he had a mind to convert him into an automaton, like that queen who never chew'd any thing, not that she had not good and strong teeth, and that her food did not require mastication ; but such was the custom and practice of her court. Her officers took her meat, and chew'd it nobly, having the inside of their mouths lined with crimson fatten, and their teeth cas'd over with fine white ivory : by means of which when they had

thoroughly and duly chewed her meat, they pass'd it into her stomach by a golden pipe: for the same reason we are told she never went to stool but by proxy. See *Rabelais* Book 5th, Chap. 13th.

CCXXIII.

If the princes of Germany continue another century to traffick in *Human Flesh*, they can no longer carry on the trade for want of commodities.

How comes it that the north, formerly so populous, that it was call'd *Humani generis officina*, is now so thinly inhabited? What is become of that prolifick principle? It subsists still, but moral causes chain up the power of natural causes.

One of the most pernicious effects of luxury, is the having multiplied the causes that interrupt the propagation of the human species, in multiplying the objects of pleasure and dissipation; we enter in this respect rich into the world: we become insignificant in it, by consuming our youth in pleasures, which are the image of marriage, and which don't fulfil the intention

of it; we marry when we are quite worn out, and we die useless.

How comes it that a people in it's infancy multiplies greatly? and what is the reason that it does not multiply any more in the same proportion, when it is once formed?

There is in some parts of Guinea a custom which shews the good sense of that nation. On a certain day of the year, the king assembles all the youth of both sexes in his dominions; and performs on the spot as many marriages as there are marriagable pairs in the assembly—*See the voyage to Guinea by Smith.* In this country they don't so much as know debauchery in young fellows, nor green sickness in girls.

They count in Spain seven million of souls; it might maintain six times the number; its wants therefore six degrees of happiness, of riches and of power. Do you believe, if a king of Spain would seriously resolve upon it, that he might not repeople his country?

A prince will people his country by facilitating marriage to the peasant, the mecha-

nick, the labourer and the soldier, the gentleman and the rich merchant, by making the courtier respect conjugal fidelity. He will facilitate marriages by encouraging industry; he will make this union respected by extending the empire of morals, and by weakening the dominion of dissolution. In Germany, the slavery of the peasants destroys both industry and propagation: in France, the ridicule that is thrown upon lawful affection, the false air of grandeur and dignity which they have been pleased to introduce even into domestick pleasures, the slavish subjection to the mode, which makes conjugal fidelity an antiquated virtue, all these have banish'd morals, and destroy'd more illustrious names than either duels or entrenchments.

CCXXIV.

A woman who will take the advice of her constitution, will always prefer to the man of sense the man whose sense does not lye in his head.

CCXXV.

CCXXV.

If the transmigration of souls was generally believed in Europe, if we were, carefully inform'd from our infancy that we had præ-existed, we should insensibly call to mind that in reality we had a former being, and perhaps we might recollect the principal circumstances of our different anterior existences: and in France people would seriously print books, with this title: *My Memoirs, from the year 300 to the year 2000.*

CCXXVI.

Such a person is irregular in his conduct, only because his situation won't allow him even the insipid pleasures of matrimony, as he stiles them.

CCXXVII.

We should hardly esteem great men, if we but knew, how they esteem themselves, how little they appear in their own eyes, and how little they are in reality.

CCXXVIII.

CCXXVII.

A physician has lately proved that love is a passion of the same nature as hunger and thirst? Alas! do not so many wretched and tyrannical moments sufficiently declare it to all the world that it needs no proofs, and still more no proofs in print.

CCXXIX.

Monfr. de Fontenelle has said : that the Naif or Simple is a shadowing of the low: La Fontaine would have said : the Naif is the sublime of nature.

CCXXX.

A society of atheists might subsist, if they had virtue for the main spring of their actions, equality for their object, and truth for their principle; in a word, if all its members were worthy of being christians.

CCXXXI.

All is mob, I say without exception, and mob to all intents and purposes, in every
country

country where there is no middle rank between the courtier and the citizen.

CCXXXII.

If the Chevalier Tailor had a little of the philosophical turn of Mr. Diderot, he would be without contradiction the properest man in the world to furnish us with good memoirs, upon the origin of human knowledge.

CCXXXIII.

Methinks the first concern of the embassador of a nation which has a distinct character, should not be so conform to the character of the nation where he is to reside: that is but representing by halves; and he soon ceases to represent his prince, when he no longer represents his nation.

CCXXXIV.

There is a certain country where neither seraglios nor bolts are known, and where the women nevertheless have neither the pleasures

pleasures of vice nor the reputation of virtue.

Who is the most virtuous woman breathing? She whom constitution hath made the most voluptuous, and reason the coldest of all women.

CCXXXV.

The grandees that pretend to make their distinctions, their politeness, and their titles pass for current coin for the services of their inferiors, are pretty like the venerable pontif, Bacbuc de Rabelais, who presenting cold water to his guests, said with an affected solemnity, 'Come, gentlemen, do but fancy, and drink.'

CCXXXVI.

This is a ridiculous, extravagant, and horrible paradox. Amidst civilized nations, the least happy are such as have few law suits: for that shews that the laws are very simple and few people submissive: now, one of the greatest misfortunes of a state is, there being only trifling interests to be discuss'd

discuss'd between private persons, and there being but few that have a will of their own. There are therefore countries, where, instead of diminishing lawsuits, the legislator should augment the number, where, instead of making laws more simple, he ought to multiply and propagate them. It belongs only to flourishing nations to have embarrass'd laws and slow decisions. Can there be any thing more absurd?

And see how far this spirit of paradox blinds people. The Bohemian, for it is easily perceiv'd that he was one, told me; that if he were king of Bohemia, he would abolish the slavery of the peasant: by that means I should augment, said he, at the same time both the number of interests and the number of citizens. As if it were necessary to augment the number of citizens and of lawsuits: was there ever a more abominable heresy? Ask seven or eight hundred proprietors; they will hold fast by the simplicity of the laws, and will cry so loud, as to stifle the groans and tears of four or five millions of slaves.

CCXXXVII.

The council of Lewis the XIVth had had form'd the project, not of taking Holland, but of chastizing it: a ridiculous project, which has been the means of the elevation of that republick. Lewis the XVth did much better; he lull'd it asleep and ruin'd it.

Is it advantageous for France, that Holland should have an hereditary Stadtholder? Yes, if it be true that a state loses in riches and in power in proportion as it loses in liberty; that does not hinder there being particular occurrences where it is very inconvenient for France, that all the forces of Holland, should be united under one head, who can make them act with readiness. It is better for her, however, to undergo the first fire of a recent monarchy than the phlegm of an established republick.

CCXXXVIII.

CCXXXVIII.

It would not perhaps be difficult to demonstrate, that the actual system of Russia, concerning the guarranty of the present constitution of Sweden has only a circumstantial advantage. Suffer Sweden to run to slavery, you will destroy it by itself: by preserving it's liberty, you restore it insensibly all the advantages that despotism had deprived it of.

CCXXXIX.

The constitution of Sweedn is admirable. the power of the king is limited by the senate; the power of the senate is circumscrib'd by the diet. The king is not rich enough to bribe, the nobility power enough to oppress, nor the people strong enough to disobey. The prince is tied down by his oaths, the nobility by the laws, and the people by their interests. The three powers are very judiciously distributed.

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the diet makes laws, the senate preserves them, and the king executes them.

Some people don't approve of the constitution of Sweden; they take for a flaw in the constitution what is only an accidental defect in the government: they see nothing but parties, and don't consider in these parties consists their liberty: their eyes are open on the abuses and shut upon the advantages.

And indeed, arbitrary government can never be made for Sweden, since thirty years of good administration and liberty have not yet entirely healed all the wounds that this government had made in a few years.

CCXL.

There is in the north a wise nation, whose future greatness I may venture to foretell, if faithful to their principles, they continue to countenance the husbandman, to encourage the merchant, to occupy the mechanick, to respect the proprietor, to be governed by a king who is a man of probity:

probity : this nation must of course be umpire of the north of Europe.

What progress have they not made in trade, since a Frenchman of genius : whom great misfortunes and business of consequence threw upon their coasts, has introduced the spirit of calculation, re-established the ancient companies, counselled the erection of new ones, created a flourishing bank, and enliven'd all by his losses and by his success.

One may hence form a judgment of the resources of this country. One of its kings is engaged in long wars that desolate his territories, a dreadful fire lays waste his capital : the plague and famine depopulate it : magnificent, liberal, active, curious, enterprising, he travels, he builds, he makes several very expensive establishments. He creates state bills, to which the necessity of the times gives the currency and the value of money : he keeps constantly in pay numerous land forces, and does not neglect the marine. At the same time he pays
his

his debts, answers his bills in specie, disburthens his subjects, and leaves at his death thirty millions of livres to his successor. He was a king indeed.

Will not his grandson give the finishing hand to the glory of the nation, he who has all the virtues of his grandfather, and who besides supplies all his defects by other virtues.

The Conclusion



You may easily perceive, gentle reader, that the title which my printer had in appearance so improperly set at the head of this treatise, is not altogether so ridiculous as it at first appeared.

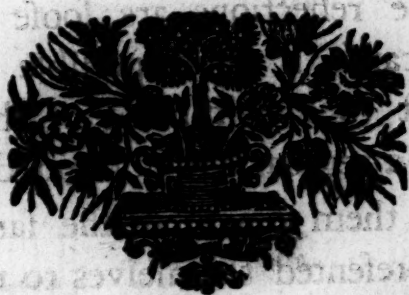
All these reflections are loose and detached, because it is not possible for persons subject to a swimming of the head, to think in a regular and connected train.

I present them to you in the same order that they presented themselves to my imagination, that I might spare myself the trouble

trouble of arranging them, and the mortification of not succeeding in it.

They are written with a good deal of freedom, because I thought that one might apply to good sense, what the king under whom I live, has said of genius, in that noble expression of his : *I will not have genius lie under any restraint in my dominions.*

F I N I S.



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...of writing them, and the
...of not succeeding in
...They are written with a good deal of
...freedom, but the one might
...apply to good, the other to bad
...whom I live, the expression of
...the expression of
...the most expressive in my language



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